A U M

"The Universe is a combination of a thousand elements; a chaos to the sense, a cosmos to the reason."—*Hindu Sage.*

"I am the cause—I am the production and dissolution of the whole of nature."—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

THEOSOPHY

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MASTERS AND THEIR MESSAGE

SOME CHAPTERS FROM THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY

THE FOES WITHIN THE HOUSEHOLD

Pause and think well upon the threshold. For if the demand of the neophyte is made without the complete purification, it will not penetrate to the seclusion of the divine adept, but will evoke the terrible forces which attend upon the black side of our human nature.

—*Light on the Path.*

Are you sure of having knocked at the right door? Do you feel certain that you have not lost your way by *stopping so often on your journey at strange doors, behind which lie in wait the fiercest enemies of those you were searching for....* One of the first rules demands that those who start on their journey *Eastward,* as candidates to the notice and favors of those who are the custodians of those Mysteries, should proceed on the straight road, without stopping on every sideway and path, seeking to join other "Masters" and professors often of the Left-Hand Science.

—H. P. Blavatsky, *The Path,* December, 1886.

The period which we have now reached in the cycle that will close between 1897-8 is, and will continue to be, one of great conflict and continued strain. If the T. S. can hold through it, good; if not, while Theosophy will remain unscathed, the Society will perish—perchance most ingloriously—and the World will suffer. I fervently hope that I may not see such a disaster in my present body. The critical nature of the stage on which we have entered is as well known to the forces that fight against us as to those that fight on our side. No opportunity will be lost of sowing dissension, of taking advantage of mistaken and false moves, of instilling doubt, of augmenting difficulties, of breathing suspicions, so that by any and every means the unity of the Society may be broken and the ranks of our Fellows thinned and

thrown into disarray. Never has it been more necessary for the members of the T. S. to lay to heart the old parable of the bundle of sticks than it is at the present time; divided, they will inevitably be broken, one by one; united, there is no force on earth able to destroy our Brotherhood. Now, I have marked with pain a tendency among you, as among the Theosophists in Europe and India, to quarrel over trifles, and to allow your very devotion to the cause of Theosophy to lead you into disunion. Believe me, that apart from such natural tendency, owing to the inherent imperfections of Human Nature, advantage is often taken by our ever-watchful enemies of your noblest qualities to betray and mislead you. Sceptics will laugh at this statement, and even some of you may put small faith in the actual existence of the terrible forces of these mental, hence subjective and invisible, yet withal living and potent, influences around all of us. But there they are, and I know of more than one among you who have felt them, and have actually been forced to acknowledge these extraneous mental pressures. On those of you who are unselfishly and sincerely devoted to the Cause, they will produce little, if any, impression. On some others, those who place their personal pride higher than their duty to the T. S., higher even than their pledge to their divine SELF, the effect is generally disastrous. Self-watchfulness is never more necessary than when a personal wish to lead, and wounded vanity, dress themselves in the peacock's feathers of devotion and altruistic work.....

...Psychism, with all its allurements and all its dangers, is necessarily developing among you, and you must beware lest the Psychic out-runs the Manasic and Spiritual development. Psychic capacities held perfectly under control, checked and directed by the Manasic principle, are valuable aids in development. But these capacities running riot, controlling instead of controlled, using instead of being used, lead the student into the most dangerous delusions and the certainty of moral destruction.

—H. P. Blavatsky. .·.
—*Letter to the American Convention,* 1891.

That prevision, that *true clairvoyance,* which to human perception appears as prophecy, and of which, as we have said, the recorded writings of H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge afford so many instances already verified in the history of the past twenty-five years, is strikingly shown in the extract given above from H. P. B.'s Letter to the American Convention of 1891. The Letter was signed on April 15, less than a month before her death. It was read before the Convention by Mrs. Annie Besant, who was also the bearer of H. P. B.'s special and separate letter of the same date to the Convention in regard to Mr. Judge, the essential sentences in which were given in a former Chapter.

The "great conflict and continued strain" of the cycle that closed "between 1897-8" was marked by the "sowing of dissensions," by "the instilling of doubt," by the "breathing suspicions," first against W. Q. Judge, then by necessity against H. P. B. herself, when it developed that the work and status of these two were inseparable, and that H. P. B. had left on record too clear testimony to be ignored or denied, of the relation of Mr. Judge to the Masters, to the Cause, and to herself. The "very devotion to the cause of Theosophy" led some "into disunion". Advantage was taken by our "ever-watchful enemies" of the "noblest qualities" of others to "betray and mislead" them. In 1893 the suspicions against Mr. Judge were first breathed, guardedly and indirectly. In 1894 public charges were made against

his truthfulness, his honesty and his loyalty. In 1895 savage and sustained efforts were made to drive him from the Society. In the same year the American Section at last rallied to his defense and cut off all official connection with the other Sections of the Society. Mr. Judge died in March, 1896. In the winter of 1897-8 the Psychism, the "personal wish to lead," and the "wounded vanity" that had afforded the vantage point within the original Society for those "terrible forces, subjective and invisible, yet withal living and potent," to destroy the Brotherhood, once more took advantage of "mistaken and false moves" to disrupt the Theosophical Society in America, and the Esoteric Section thenceforth existed only in name and form. Like the Society, it became a "soulless corpse,... no longer either a Brotherhood, nor a body over the face of which broods the Spirit from beyond the great Range," as one of the Masters wrote after the desertion of H. P. B. at the period of the Coulomb attack, by those who should have been foremost in her defense.

Mrs. Annie Besant joined the Theosophical Society in 1889 and became a pledged member of the Esoteric Section. At the time of her entrance she was perhaps the best known woman in England, with a wide reputation as an orator and writer. The defection of Mabel Collins (Mrs. Cook), occurring at almost the same time, H. P. B. made Mrs. Besant co-editor of *Lucifer*. Mrs. Besant threw herself into theosophical work and study with all the fiery impetuosity that had brought her fame as the associate of Charles Bradlaugh. It is probable that the accession of no single recruit to the cause of Theosophy created so great a sensation, or was fraught with such tremendous consequences. That the weaknesses as well as the strong qualities in her character were well understood by H. P. B. is indicated by two phrases of Madame Blavatsky's. The first, quoted by Mrs. Besant in her *"Autobiography"*, published in 1893, shows as well that in her better intervals Mrs. Besant was not ignorant of her own dominant characteristic. "Child," said H. P. B., "your pride is terrible; you are as proud as Lucifer himself." The other sentence of H. P. B.'s is contained in her letter to Mr. Judge of March 27, 1891, to which reference has been made: "She is not psychic nor spiritual in the least—all intellect."

H. P. B. knew also the good and hopeful aspects of Mrs. Besant's nature, as is shown by other extracts from the same letter: where she speaks of Mrs. Besant as the "soul of honor," "uncompromisingly truthful," says that "unselfishness and altruism is Annie Besant's name," and continues, "she is a most wonderful woman, my right hand, my successor, when I will be forced to leave you, my sole hope in England, as you (Mr. Judge) are my sole hope in America." She says again, "It is only a few months she studies occultism with me in the innermost group of the E. S., and yet she has passed far beyond all others."

It is upon such statements written by H. P. B. privately to individuals, and alleged verbal statements to others that Mrs. Besant's claim to be the occult successor to H. P. B. is based. Had it been H. P. B.'s intention that Mrs. Besant should be recognized and accepted as the visible head of the Esoteric and Exoteric branches of the Movement, it is not conceivable that she would have left her hundreds of earnest, devoted students in any uncertainty in such an important matter. Such statements as have been written by H. P. B. with her physical hand in regard to Mrs. Besant have nevertheless to be considered; reputed verbal statements cannot be admitted because of the impossibility of verification.

Of all written statements in this direction, those contained in the letter to Mr. Judge above mentioned are the most important because they cover the whole ground. "She is not psychic nor spiritual in the least—all intellect." "It is only a few months she studies occultism with me in the innermost group of the E. S., and yet she has passed far beyond all others." This cannot mean anything more than *intellectually* in view of the first extract quoted.

In writing of Mrs. Besant as "the soul of honor"; "uncompromisingly truthful"; and that "unselfishness and altruism is Annie Besant's name", H. P. B. was making a direct appeal to the best side of Mrs. Besant's nature, for the letter was written to Mr. Judge, not for his information, but that through him these statements should be brought to Mrs. Besant's attention, and that the weight of his knowledge of them might be a holding power in Mrs. Besant's mind. All this was done.

The following extract will be the last to consider: "She is a most wonderful woman, my right hand, my successor, when I will be forced to leave you, my sole hope in England, as you (Mr. Judge) are my sole hope in America." There is no question in regard to Mrs. Besant's being a "most wonderful woman"; the intensity of purpose and unqualified devotion with which she followed her convictions, whatever they might for the time be, her eager and keen intellect, with its power of facile expression, made a very unusual combination. That she was H. P. B.'s right hand as writer and speaker under direction, is easily understood. As to "my successor when I will be forced to leave you", it is clear that more than one meaning can be deduced from this phrase, and that the true meaning can be obtained only by considering all the statements made, and all the facts of record. Granting that H. P. B. had prevision of the effects that must flow from the causes already in operation, and that the time for her own departure was but a few weeks away, she would know that Mrs. Besant's prominence and forceful nature could not fail to turn the eyes of English and European students in her direction; in this light the term "my successor" is comprehensible, and in no other way. For it is unthinkable that one who was not psychic nor spiritual in the least could be successor to H. P. B. except in an external and materialistic way. So, it would be

true for H. P. B. to say "my sole hope in England", whether for better or for worse.

Scarcely more than a fortnight after the above letter was written Mrs. Besant was on her way to America to attend the American Convention of 1891 as H. P. B.'s messenger, bearing Her last greeting. H. P. B. died before Mrs. Besant's return from the Convention. Mr. Judge came over at once and the meeting of the Council of the E. S. was held at the London headquarters on May 27, 1891, from the Statement of which extracts were given in the last Chapter.

Knowing full well what the future held in store of evil and of good potentialities, as did H. P. B., Mr. Judge at the Council meeting saw that all the essential facts were made matters of indisputable record, by the attestation of the entire Council. There, for the sake of the Cause, and for the help of the individuals whose hour of Karmic trial and testing out was approaching, Mr. Judge did as H. P. B. had done so many times and with so many, placed himself in pawn and fortified with responsibility those who all too soon were to "place their personal pride higher than their duty to the T. S., higher even than their pledge to their divine Self." Mrs. Besant was placed in joint charge of the E. S. with Mr. Judge, and later, to allay if possible the rising tide of ambition, the School was changed into the Eastern Division, with Mrs. Besant in charge, and the Western Division (American) in Mr. Judge's care, while nominally both Mrs. Besant and Mr. Judge remained in joint Headship.

It has been asked by many students more or less conversant with the facts, but unable to discern the play of forces behind the scenes, why, if H. P. B. had genuine occult knowledge, she should have taken Mrs. Besant and others into her confidence and given them so large and so public a place in the work; and why, if Mr. Judge possessed the same power to read the heart, he should have permitted and aided Mrs. Besant in her prominence in the Esoteric Section as well as in the Society, when, if they were genuine occultists both H. P. B. and Mr. Judge must have foreseen the subsequent desertions and treasons.

The same questions have been asked regarding Madame Coulomb, Prof. Coues, Mabel Collins, V. Solovyoff, A. P. Sinnett, Col. Olcott, and others. Doubtless the same questions have sorely puzzled the sincere Christian regarding Judas and Peter. The answer may be given, but it will never be understood till Theosophy is understood and applied, and the first Laws of Occultism made a *living power* in the hearts of the students as they are of the Masters. Those first principles of Occultism are *loyalty* and *gratitude*. Where these are not embodied there is first misunderstanding, then delusion, then betrayal. The explanation here, as in all other matters, may be found in the writings of H. P. B., for she went through all the experiences that can confront any student, and placed of record her example and her precept in every difficulty and in every prob-

lem. We quote from the "Preliminary Explanation" of the Third Instruction:

"Some of the Theosophists, yet quite recently almost adorers of the T. S., and especially of the Masters, have lost or are losing, *unconsciously to themselves**, their moral balance; some because of the venomous words spoken in their ears by traitors, while others are flinging aside to the four winds their good Karmic chances, and turning into bitter and unprincipled enemies. Of the rude public one would have expected this, but from friends, brothers, and associates!.....

"The old wondering query: 'How is it that "poor H. P. B.," notwithstanding the Masters at her back, and her own insight, is *so evidently unable* to know her friends from her foes?' ran once more the round of Theosophical circles....

"Brothers, if you *will* judge from appearances, and from the worldly standpoint, you are right; but if you take the trouble of *looking into the inner causes producing outward results**, you will find that you are decidedly in the wrong....

"Take for an instant for granted (you, who still may doubt at moments in your hearts) that I am doing the work of real living Masters. And if so, then surely I would not have been entrusted with such a mission unless I had pledged myself irrevocably to the laws of the Ethics, Science, and Philosophy THEY teach. Come whatever may, I *have to* abide by these laws and rules even in the face of condemnation to death. Now, if the law, in common legislature even, holds that no person should be condemned before his guilt is proven, or becomes manifest, how much more strict must this law be in our Occult Code? Have I the right—in special cases when I see that a person has in him the germs of, or even a decided proclivity toward, evil-doing, deception, ingratitude, or revenge,... but that, on the other hand, for the time being, he is earnest and sincere in his interest and sympathy for Theosophy and Occultism; have I the right, I ask, to deny him the chance of becoming a better man, merely out of fear that he may one day turn traitor? I will say more. Knowing, as I do, that *no earthly forces combined can destroy the T. S. and its Truths,* even if they can and *do,* in each case, hurt more or less my outward and miserable *personality,* that shell that I am solemnly pledged to use as a *buffer* to the cause I serve, have I the right, think you, out of mere personal cowardice and in self-defence, to refuse to anyone the chance of profiting by the truths I can teach him, and of thereby becoming better?...

"...I have acted on this principle of trying to help everyone irrespective of what I may have to suffer personally for it."

The sixteenth chapter of the *Bhagavad-Gita* is entitled, "Devotion through discrimination between godlike and demoniacal natures. Therein are set forth these everlasting spiritual and moral qualities which form the true "marks of the Buddha." In the same chapter the opposite and irrepressible because dominating characteristics of the "demoniacal disposition" are as clearly stated. The one is the ever-recognisable portrait of the Mahatma, the Master, the Adept, however and whatever the mortal mask may be. The other is the equally unmistakeable silhouette of the "Brothers of the Shadow," the follower of the Left-Hand Path, however they may seek to disguise themselves. The difference lies ever in the spiritual, moral and mental qualities and attributes, and not in station, body, circumstance, or *siddhis* displayed in physical existence. Until it is seated

*Italics ours.

in power over its victim the force of Black Magic is never recognized as such, but is taken as the veritable garment of Light. The power of the adept in sorcery and selfishness lies in the ignorance of the seeker for the mysterious and the occult, in the weaknesses inherent in human nature, even the best and noblest of human nature, and in the simulation of those canons which human nature has erected as the signs of holiness. The pharisees and sadducees, the brahmins and priests, conform to these canons, practice austerities, are noted for their asceticism, lead the most strict lives, and are taken by humanity as the bridge to the Divine. Thence, over and over again, the spirit of the Messages of all the great Founders has been smothered, and the letter of the so-called "great religions" only remains, so that humanity plunges from sorrow to sorrow through the generations, remaining steeped in superstition or materialism. The point of divergence at each epoch may be discerned in the failure of the disciples of the Teachers to grasp the real nature of the Messenger and assimilate the Message.

Human nature is the battle ground of the contending forces of Good and Evil, and Humanity the stake. Each true Disciple adds one more warrior to the ranks of those who labor for the salvation of the race. Each failure drags down hundreds and thousands in his fall.

Not until students of the great Message of Theosophy set themselves seriously to study the underlying causes of the events of the last thirty years will they be able to realize that we have been repeating the mistakes and the failures of other lives, each of us in his own way. The pitfalls are the same for all, and they are, as we have said, inherent in our human nature. "So deeprooted in human nature is infidelity and selfishness; no one need therefore to be sure of his own spiritual nature. No amount of lip learning will avail us in the hour of need. We have to study the law in all its aspects and assimilate to our highest consciousness—our super sensuous consciousness—all the data which go to prove and convince us that the Power is spiritual." And Mr. Judge goes on to repeat, "The Chela is not only called to face all latent evil propensities of his nature, but in addition the whole volume of maleficent power accumulated in the community and nation to which he belongs... until the result is known."

If, therefore, we have undertaken some part of the weighty and solemn task of pointing to some of the lessons to be learned from a study of the efforts of the students of the Esoteric Section, and the failures made, it is not to be from any feeling of our own superiority, any certainty of our own immunity. Rather from the ever-growing conviction that for each one of us the foe to spiritual progress is within the household, is within ourselves. Brave and ardent, noble and self-sacrificing were those who failed. They did not fail by reason of their virtues or their good qualities, but because of the unsuspected latent evil propensities, the self-complacency and

self-assurance that is hidden deep in the hearts of us all. The very fury of our efforts wake all the demons at the threshold—our demons of vanity, pride, and infidelity. We study theosophical teachings and fail to practically apply our studies. "They teach unity and non-separateness. This must mean *all* that is implied. It is not a mere general unity, but is a similarity and communion in every part of the nature. *If there is uncharitableness, if there is disloyalty,* if there are harshness and unbrotherliness in the race, they exist also in us if only in the germ. Those germs require only the proper personal conditions to make them sprout. Our duty therefore is to continually encourage in ourselves the active feelings that are the opposites of those. Those of us who think knowledge can be acquired without pursuing the path of love mistake. The soul is aware of what it requires. It demands altruism, and so long as that is absent, so long will mere intellectual study lead to nothing. And especially in those who have deliberately called down the HIGHER SELF does that SELF require active practice and application of the philosophy which is studied."

These words, written by Mr. Judge to the students at the very time when he was under the heavy trial of the fire of assaults from those whom he was most trying to help, and addressed to those loyal students who yet felt resentment toward those who had fallen into the pit of Peter and of Judas, are not only typical of the divine nature, but they are an instruction and a warning to us all.

The way of departure lies in our assurance of our own impeccability and consequent capacity to judge others. We doubt the philosophy, we doubt the teachers, we doubt our brethren, but ourselves we never doubt. Thus we supply the open door to the subtile influences of the dark side.

Studying the recorded utterances and actions of those students who began bright with promise, full of loyalty and zeal, it becomes clear to the searcher of causes that not one of those who later belittled or betrayed H. P. B. and W. Q. J., ever for a moment discerned that as the years went by they in fact traveled a complete circle, and still in the name of Theosophy and the Masters, preached and practised the reverse of what they originally had been helped to acquire. There is a great, if sad, lesson to be learned from all this. Not one of those students need have failed. They had the teaching and the teacher with them, but no teaching and no sacrifice of the teachers availed, for these disciples failed to apply *to themselves* what was given them. We, in our turn, need not err, nor falter, nor fail. But assuredly we shall also pass from light to darkness, never knowing our transit, if we do not apply *to ourselves in the light of the Teachers and the Teachings,* the lessons to be gained from study and reflection upon the meaning of the events in the history of the Theosophical Movement of our times.

RAYS FROM THE EAST*

(FRAGMENTS OF M. S. S., WRITTEN DOWN BY J. . . . .)

THE longings of no human heart are to be lightly set aside; each one of them is a sub-tone in the great harmony of life; each one is the cry of some brother who has often forgotten his language, but still feels his wants. In his heart burns, however feebly, the spark from the Divine ever seeking the way back to the centre from which it came.

True it is that a man may have been initiated, in his past lives, into many degrees of knowledge and power, who yet had not had certain experiences necessary before entering on the next degree; and furthermore, that not one single degree can be lost to him, even though he may now appear before you, in a human garb not inviting, not puissant, not impetuous, nor in any sense free from faults.

* * * once wrote: "An abyss opens behind each step; he cannot go back, and an irresistible impulse urges him forward."

That "abyss" is the "era of achievement," the passage from an "intermediate form" into a "new type." It is *not* mere absorption. Absorption goes on for periods anterior to it. During the absorption, and after saturation, the being goes on assimilating. Adjacent tissue—so to say—alters by either what your scientists call *infiltration,* or by what Patanjali calls *supply of natures.* There could not be, when the process is completed, any recession to the old type after the intermediate form has disappeared. But truly, just as in your material world, during vast shadowy periods, the vacated—almost—intermediate types floated about until the *habit* of nature had changed and they became useless, and many beings had again and again reoccupied these forms, so in each daily life, or moral life, the intermediate forms remain until *your* habit has totally altered. They then disappear forever. So it is an abyss, great, profound, wide, silent and tenantless.

In a sense it is like the closed valve in the circulation, which permits no blood to engorge the heart. And the impulse that urges forward, has its source in the great heart which urges on the astral light that makes our poor human hearts beat to and fro. And as the mere motion of the heart cannot be stopped at ease because it is the servant of the great heart, so the impulse cannot be resisted by him who has voluntarily gone into the vast circulation of the great Adam; who, urged on by reverberating echoes from a *living* past, has started toward the goal. Often he knows not why he does so, and is perhaps unaware that the echoes have transformed themselves, by the subtle alchemy of nature, into unconscious leanings very often called "atavistic" (wrongly) by scientific men. So he knows them not as echoes.

Perhaps failure to carry out a chosen plan is part of a necessary step. Our failures to encompass a set end are our best teachers,

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provided we recognize the real work that inevitably is contained in the failure.

The very rush of the onset made by him who impetuously enters *the path,* has in itself the recoil, and a brave ship is required; and not only a brave ship, but also the pilot called by the name "experience," and the captain who has sailed in many seas.

Each man keeps his own account—with his eyes closed; but his hand writes down the correct sums, and the balance *has to be struck.*

The examiner of accounts is deaf, dumb and blind; the entries are in relief, and he measures them by touch.

I charge you to give these words to those whom you know are waiting and anxious to hear or see any words of mine.

May we be guided towards the living Truth. +

THE SECRET DOCTRINE AND PHYSIOLOGY*

THE HEART AND PLEXUSES

I find on p. 92 of Vol. 2, *Secret Doctrine,* the heart of man described as consisting of four lower cavities and three higher divisions. I cannot reconcile this statement with human anatomy. If the two auricles and two ventricles are to be regarded as the four lower cavities, which are the three higher divisions? If the aorta and pulmonary artery are to be regarded as two of them, then the two *vena cavae* and the pulmonary veins must also be counted. Again on the same page it is asserted that there are seven nervous plexuses, which (each of them, I suppose, is meant) radiate seven rays. . . . There are sixty nervous plexuses enumerated in works on anatomy. Of all of these, one only (the epigastric) has seven subdivisions (included in the above sixty). On the same page it is asserted there are seven layers of skin; physiology counts only four. If there are seven, which are they and where to be found? These difficulties present a serious obstacle to the acceptance of the statements of *The Secret Doctrine* on matters less capable of verification.

M. R. LEVERSON. M.D.

In my opinion the three cavities of the heart are (1) the pericardium, (2) the right auricle, (3) the left auricle. The four cavities below are (1) the right ventricle, (2) the pulmonary artery, (3) the left ventricle, (4) the aorta. The pulmonary artery and the aorta are prolongations of the heart; the one to the lungs and the other to all parts of the body. Their pulsations and structure are like and correspond with the pulsations and structure of the central organ. They are simply the going out of the heart to all parts of the organism, terminating in the wonderful capillary system through which life and nourishment are dispensed. The system of veins is composed simply of tubes for conveying back to the heart and lungs the used-up blood, which, after passing through the capillary system, has to be revivified before it is again fitted to give life and nourishment to the body. From this it is seen how completely the great heart fills the physical form. It is a much larger organ than is generally supposed. What is called heart, ordinarily speaking, is simply the central portion only.

J. H. S., M.D.

In this matter very much depends upon what is called heart and what not, as also upon the system of anatomical analysis. I think the four lower

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cavities are the two auricles and the two ventricles. The three other divisions are the two auricular appendages and the *foramen ovale*, which latter is a passage between auricle and ventricle, strongly marked in the fœtal heart but nearly obliterated in the adult.

K. H., F. T. S.

In that part of the *Secret Doctrine* which is referred to by Dr. Leverson, it cannot be strictly said that the author "describes" the heart as consisting, etc., but she does speak as if taking it for granted that such is the division. I therefore understand her to refer to the true division or analysis of the heart, and not to the one presently accepted among physicians. The medical fraternity have not always been right, and their conclusions have from time to time been revised. It was thought that the discovery of the circulation of the blood was unique in the West, but in fact it has been known in the East for many centuries. Even the nervous system has been known and is spoken of in ancient Hindu books. In one place it is said, "a thousand and one roads lead from the heart in every direction," and goes on to state that in those ramifications the inner person resides or functions during sleep. This may very well refer to the use of the nervous system, especially in sleep.

In respect to the divisions of the skin, Occultism says that there are actually seven divisions, and medical scientists can only state that they do not know of those seven, but have no right to say that there are not seven. If one reads the *Secret Doctrine* and takes its statements in respect to science as intending to refer to science as it now is, and then finds a difficulty because the author does not agree with science, there never of course could be any reliance placed upon it; but that book does not agree with science and does not pretend to, except in so far as science is absolutely correct. It is well to suspend judgment in regard to matters where there is a disagreement between the *Secret Doctrine* and Science, inasmuch as medical and other schools have not yet uttered the last words in their respective departments, and much has to be found out and many revisions of theories made before science will have come to its final determinations. But I have no doubt that these final conclusions will be in concordance with the *Secret Doctrine*.

The "seven nervous plexuses" spoken of are the seven main divisions, of greater importance in the human frame, known to Occultism, and the masters of that science do not deny that Western science has enumerated sixty on its own account, but these sixty are all included in the seven great plexuses. These latter are well known to students of Occultism who have proceeded by the road which leads to a knowledge of them. And it is known to those students that these seven control all the rest in the human organism, whatever they may be. The only divergence, then, on this point, is that science places every nervous plexus that it knows by itself, and is not aware of the fact that they are classified in natural law into seven great divisions. This can be verified, but not by consulting books on anatomy nor by ordinary modern dissections.

William Q. Judge.

MEMORY IN THE DYING*

WE find in a very old letter from a MASTER, written years ago to a member of the Theosophical Society, the following suggestive lines on the mental state of a dying man:—

"At the last moment, the whole life is reflected in our memory and emerges from all the forgotten nooks and corners, picture after picture, one event after the other. The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong, supreme impulse; and memory restores faithfully every impression that has been entrusted to it during the period of the brain's activity. That impression and thought which was the strongest, naturally becomes the most vivid, and survives, so to say, all the rest, which now vanish and disappear for ever, but to reappear in Devachan. No man dies insane or unconscious, as some physiologists assert. Even a madman or one in a fit of *delirium tremens* will have his instant of perfect lucidity at the moment of death, though unable to say so to those present. The man may often appear dead. Yet from the last pulsation, and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body, *the brain thinks* and the EGO lives, in these few brief seconds, his whole life over again. Speak in whispers, ye who assist at a death-bed and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death. Especially have ye to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought and hinder the busy work of the Past casting its reflection upon the veil of the Future. . . . . ."

The above statement has been more than once strenuously opposed by materialists; Biology and (Scientific) Psychology, it was urged were both against the idea, and while the latter had no well demonstrated data to go upon in such a *hypothesis,* the former dismissed the idea as an empty "superstition." Meanwhile, even biology is bound to progress, and this is what we learn of its latest achievements. Dr. Ferré has communicated quite recently to the Biological Society of Paris a very curious note on the mental state of the dying, which corroborates marvellously the above lines. For, it is to the special phenomenon of life-reminiscences, and that sudden re-emerging on the blank walls of memory, from all its long neglected and forgotten "nooks and corners," of "picture after picture" that Dr. Ferré draws the special attention of biologists.

We need notice but two among the numerous instances given by this Scientist in his *Rapport,* to show how scientifically correct are the teachings we receive from our Eastern Masters.

The first instance is that of a moribund consumptive whose disease was developed in consequence of a spinal affection. Already consciousness had left the man, when, recalled to life by two successive injections of a gramme of ether, the patient slightly lifted

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his head and began talking rapidly in Flemish, a language no one around him, nor yet himself, understood. Offered a pencil and a piece of white cardboard, he wrote with great rapidity several lines in that language—very correctly, as was ascertained later on—fell back, and died. When translated—the writing was found to refer to a very prosaic affair. He had suddenly recollected, he wrote, that he owed a certain man a sum of fifteen francs since 1868—hence more than twenty years—and desired it to be paid.

But why write his last wish in Flemish? The defunct was a native of Antwerp, but had left his country in childhood, without ever knowing the language, and having passed all his life in Paris, could speak and write only in French. Evidently his returning consciousness, that last flash of memory that displayed before him, as in a retrospective panorama, all his life, even to the trifling fact of his having borrowed twenty years back a few francs from a friend, did not emanate from his *physical* brain alone, but rather from his spiritual memory, that of the *Higher Ego* (Manas or the re-incarnating individuality). The fact of his speaking and writing Flemish, a language that he had heard at a time of life when he could not yet speak himself, is an additional proof. *The* Ego *is almost omniscient in its immortal nature.* For indeed matter is nothing more than "the last degree and as the shadow of existence," as Ravaisson, member of the French Institute, tells us.

But to our second case.

Another patient, dying of pulmonary consumption and likewise reanimated by an injection of ether, turned his head towards his wife and rapidly said to her: "You cannot find that pin now; all the floor has been renewed since then." This was in reference to the loss of a scarf pin eighteen years before, a fact so trifling that it had almost been forgotten, but which had not failed to be revived in the last thought of the dying man, who having expressed what he saw in words, suddenly stopped and breathed his last. Thus any one of the thousand little daily events, and accidents of a long life would seem capable of being recalled to the flickering consciousness, at the supreme moment of dissolution. A long life, perhaps, lived over again in the space of one short second!

A third case may be noticed, which corroborates still more strongly that assertion of Occultism which traces all such remembrances to the thought-power of the *individual*, instead of to that of the personal (lower) Ego. A young girl, who had been a sleepwalker up to her twenty-second year, performed during her hours of somnambulic sleep the most varied functions of domestic life, of which she had no remembrance upon awakening.

Among other psychic impulses that manifested themselves only during her sleep, was a secretive tendency quite alien to her waking state. During the latter she was open and frank to a degree, and very careless of her personal property; but in the somnambulic state she would take articles belonging to herself or within her reach and hide them away with ingenious cunning. This habit being

known to her friends and relatives, and two nurses, having been in attendance to watch her actions during her night rambles for years, nothing disappeared but what could be easily restored to its usual place. But on one sultry night, the nurse falling asleep, the young girl got up and went to her father's study. The latter, a notary of fame, had been working till a late hour that night. It was during a momentary absence from his room that the somnambule entered, and deliberately possessed herself of a will left open upon the desk, as also of a sum of several thousand pounds in bonds and notes. These she proceeded to hide in the hollow of two dummy pillars set up in the library to match the solid ones, and stealing from the room before her father's return, she regained her chamber and bed without awakening the nurse who was still asleep in the armchair.

The result was, that, as the nurse stoutly denied that her young mistress had left the room, suspicion was diverted from the real culprit and the money could not be recovered. The loss of the will involved a law-suit which almost beggared her father and entirely ruined his reputation, and the family were reduced to great straits. About nine years later the young girl who, during the previous seven years had not been somnambulic, fell into a consumption of which she ultimately died. Upon her death-bed, the veil which had hung before her physical memory was raised; her divine insight awakened; the pictures of her life came streaming back before her inner eye; and among others she saw the scene of her somnambulic robbery. Suddenly arousing herself from the lethargy in which she had lain for several hours, her face showed signs of some terrible emotion working within, and she cried out "Ah! what have I done? . . . It was I who took the will and the money. . . . Go search the dummy pillars in the library, I have . . ." She never finished her sentence for her very emotion killed her. But the search was made and the will and money found within the oaken pillars as she had said. What makes the case more strange is, that these pillars were so high, that even by standing upon a chair and with plenty of time at her disposal instead of only a few moments, the somnambulist could not have reached up and dropped the objects into the hollow columns. It is to be noted, however, that ecstatics and convulsionists (*Vide* the *Convulsionnaires de St. Medard et de Morzine*) seem to possess an abnormal facility for climbing blank walls and leaping even to the tops of trees.

Taking the facts as stated, would they not induce one to believe that the somnambulic personage possesses an intelligence and memory of its own apart from the physical memory of the waking lower Self; and that it is the former which remembers *in articulo mortis*, the body and physical senses in the latter case ceasing to function, and the intelligence gradually making its final escape through the avenue of psychic, and last of all of spiritual consciousness? And why not? Even materialistic science begins now to concede to psychology more than one fact that would have vainly begged of it recognition twenty years ago. "The real existence" Ravaisson

tells us, "the life of which every other life is but an imperfect outline, a faint sketch, is that of the Soul." That which the public in general calls "soul," we speak of as the "reincarnating Ego." "To be, is to live, and to live is to will and think," says the French Scientist.* But, if indeed the physical brain is of only a limited area, the field for the containment of rapid flashes of unlimited and infinite thought, neither will nor thought can be said to be generated *within* it, even according to materialistic Science, the impassable chasm between matter and mind having been confessed both by Tyndall and many others. The fact is that the human brain is simply the canal between two planes—the psycho-spiritual and the material—through which every abstract and metaphysical idea filters from the Manasic down to the lower human consciousness. Therefore, the ideas about the infinite and the absolute are not, nor can they be, within *our* brain capacities. They can be faithfully mirrored only by our Spiritual consciousness, thence to be more or less faintly projected on to the tables of our perceptions on this plane. Thus while the records of even important events are often obliterated from our memory, not the most trifling action of our lives can disappear from the "Soul's" memory, because it is no Memory for it, but an ever present reality on the plane which lies outside our conceptions of space and time. "Man is the measure of all things," said Aristotle; and surely he did not mean by man, the form of flesh, bones and muscles!

Of all the deep thinkers Edgard Quinet, the author of "Creation," expressed this idea the best. Speaking of man, full of feelings and thoughts of which he has either no consciousness at all, or which he feels only as dim and hazy impressions, he shows that man realizes quite a small portion only of his moral being. "The thoughts we think, but are unable to define and formulate, once repelled, seek refuge in the very root of our being." . . . When chased by the persistent efforts of our will "they retreat before it, still further, still deeper into—who knows what—fibres, but wherein they remain to reign and impress us unbidden and unknown to ourselves. . . ."

Yes; they become as imperceptible and as unreachable as the vibrations of sound and colour when these surpass the normal range. Unseen and eluding grasp, they yet work, and thus lay the foundations of our future actions and thoughts, and obtain mastery over us, though we may never think of them and are often ignorant of their very being and presence. Nowhere does Quinet, the great student of Nature, seem more right in his observations than when speaking of the mysteries with which we are all surrounded: "The mysteries of neither earth nor heaven but those present in the marrow of our bones, in our brain cells, our nerves and fibres. No need," he adds, "in order to search for the unknown, to lose ourselves in the realm of the stars, when here, near us and *in us*, rests the unreachable. As our world is mostly formed of imperceptible

* *Rapport sur la Philosophie en France au XIXme. Siecle.*

beings which are the real constructors of its continents, so likewise is man."

Verily so; since man is a bundle of obscure, and to himself unconscious perceptions, of indefinite feelings and misunderstood emotions, of ever-forgotten memories and knowledge that becomes on the surface of his plane—*ignorance*. Yet, while physical memory in a healthy living man is often obscured, one fact crowding out another weaker one, at the moment of the great change that man calls death—that which we call "memory" seems to return to us in all its vigour and freshness.

May this not be due as just said, simply to the fact that, for a few seconds at least, our two memories (or rather the two states, the highest and the lowest state, of consciousness) blend together, thus forming one, and that the dying being finds himself on a plane wherein there is neither past nor future, but all is one present? Memory, as we all know, is strongest with regard to its early associations, then when the future man is only a child, and more of a soul than of a body; and if memory is a part of our Soul, then, as Thackeray has somewhere said, it must be of necessity eternal. Scientists deny this; we, Theosophists, affirm that it is so. They have for what they hold but negative proofs; we have, to support us, innumerable facts of the kind just instanced, in the three cases described by us. The links of the chain of cause and effect with relation to mind are, and must ever remain a *terra-incognita* to the materialist. For if they have already acquired a deep conviction that as Pope says—

> "Lulled in the countless chambers of the brain
> Our thoughts are link'd by many a *hidden* chain. . . ."

—and that they are still unable to discover these chains, how can they hope to unravel the mysteries of the higher, Spiritual, Mind!

"H. P. B."

OF STUDYING THEOSOPHY*

IT is often asked: How should I or my friend study theosophy? In beginning this study a series of "don'ts" should first engage the student's attention. Don't imagine that you know everything, or that any man in scientific circles has uttered the last word on any subject; don't suppose that the present day is the best, or that the ancients were superstitious, with no knowledge of natural laws. Don't forget that arts, sciences, and metaphysics did not have their rise with European civilization; and don't forget that the influence of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle of ancient Greece is still imposed upon the modern mind. Don't think that our astronomers would have made anything but a mess of the zodiac if the old Chaldeans

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had not left us the one we use. Don't forget that it is easy to prove that civilization of the highest order has periodically rolled around this globe and left traces great and small behind. Don't confuse Buddhism with Brahmanism, or imagine that the Hindus are Buddhists; and don't take the word of English or German sanscrit scholars in explanation of the writings and scriptures of eastern nations whose thoughts are as foreign in their form to ours as our countries are. One should first be prepared to examine with a clear and unbiased mind.

But suppose the enquirer is disposed at the outset to take the word of theosophical writers, then caution is just as necessary, for theosophical literature does not bear the stamp of authority. We should all be able to give a reason for the hope that is within us, and we cannot do that if we have swallowed without study the words of others.

But what is study? It is not the mere reading of books, but rather long, earnest, careful thought upon that which we have taken up. If a student accepts reincarnation and karma as true doctrines, the work is but begun. Many theosophists accept doctrines of that name, but are not able to say what it is they have accepted. They do not pause to find out what reincarnates, or how, when, or why karma has its effects, and often do not know what the word means. Some at first think that when they die they will reincarnate, without reflecting that it is the lower personal I they mean, which cannot be born again in a body. Others think that karma is—well, karma, with no clear idea of classes of karma, or whether or not it is punishment or reward or both. Hence a careful learning from one or two books of the statement of the doctrines, and then a more careful study of them, are absolutely necessary.

There is too little of such right study among theosophists, and too much reading of new books. No student can tell whether Mr. Sinnett in *Esoteric Buddhism* writes reasonably unless his book is learned and not merely skimmed. Although his style is clear, the matter treated is difficult, needing firm lodgment in the mind, followed by careful thought. A proper use of his book, *The Secret Doctrine, The Key to Theosophy,* and all other matter written upon the constitution of man, leads to an acquaintance with the doctrines as to the being most concerned, and only when that acquaintance is obtained is one fitted to understand the rest.

Another branch of study is that pursued by natural devotees, those who desire to enter into the work itself for the good of humanity. Those should study all branches of theosophical literature all the harder, in order to be able to clearly explain it to others, for a weak reasoner or an apparently credulous believer has not much weight with others.

Western theosophists need patience, determination, discrimination, and memory, if they ever intend to seize and hold the attention of the world for the doctrines they disseminate.

William Brehon.

"IT'S THE CAT!"*

(Dedicated to those Members of the T. S. whom the cap may fit.)

> "Let ignominy brand thy hated name;
> Let modest matrons at thy mention start;
> And blushing virgins when they read our annals
> Skip o'er the guilty page that holds thy legend,
> And blots the noble work. . . ."
>
> —SHAKESPEARE.

> An excuse is worse and more terrible than a lie; for an excuse is a lie guarded.
>
> —POPE.

"THE woman gave me of the tree, and I did eat," said the first man, the first sneak and coward, thus throwing his own share of the blame upon his helpless mate. This may have been *"worse* than a lie" according to Pope, yet, in truth—it was not one. LIE was not born with the first man or woman either. The Lie is the product of later civilization, the legitimate child of SELFISHNESS—ready to sacrifice to itself the whole of mankind—and of HYPOCRISY, often born of fear. The original sin for which, agreeably to the orthodox Sunday School teaching, the whole world was cursed, drowned, and went unforgiven till the year I A.D.—is not the *greatest* sin. The descendants of Adam improving upon their grandsire's transgression, invented lie and added to it excuse and prevarication. "It's the cat" is a saying that may have originated with the antediluvians, whenever an *actual sin* had been committed and a scapegoat was needed. But it required the post-diluvians to father on the "cat" even that which had never been committed at all; that which was an invention of the fertile brain of the slanderers, who never hesitate to lie most outrageously whenever they feel inclined to ventilate a grudge against a brother or neighbour. Fruits of atonement, Children of redemption, we lie and sin the more readily for that. No "shame on us," but:

> "*Hail* to the policy that first began
> To temper with the heart to hide its thoughts,"

is the world's motto. Is not the World one gigantic lie? Is there anything under the sun that offers such rich variety and almost countless degrees and shades as lying does? Lying is the policy of our century, from Society lying, as a necessity imposed upon us by culture and good breeding, up to individual lying, *i. e.*, uttering a good, square unmitigated lie, in the shape of false witness, or as the Russian proverb has it:—"shifting off a sin from a diseased on to a healthy head." Oh *lie*—legion is thy name! Fibs and lies are now the cryptogamic excrescences on the soil of our moral and daily lives as toadstools are those of forest swamps, and their respective orders are as large. Both are fungi; plants which delight in shadowy nooks, and form mildew, mold and smut on both the

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soil of moral life and that of physical nature. Oh, for that righteous tongue:—

"That will not sell its honesty, or tell a lie!"

As said, there are fibs and fibs, conscious and unconscious, hoaxes and impostures, deceptions and calumnies—the latter often followed by moral and physical ruin—mild perversions of truth or evasion, and deliberate duplicity. But there are also catchpenny lies, in the shape of newspaper chaff, and innocent misrepresentations, due simply to ignorance. To the latter order belong most of the newspaper statements regarding the Theosophical Society, and its official *scape-goat*—H. P. Blavatsky.

It has become a matter of frequent occurrence of late, to find in serious articles upon scientific subjects the name of "Esoteric Buddhism" mentioned, and oftener still that of "Mme. Blavatsky" taken in vain. The latter circumstance is really very, *very* considerate, and—in one sense at any rate—*overwhelmingly* flattering!

To find one's humble name collated with those of Sir Monier-Monier-Williams K. C. I. E. and Professor Bastian is an honour, indeed. When, for instance, the *great* Oxford lecturer chooses to make a few big and bold slashes into fact and truth—no doubt to please his pious audience—and says that Buddhism has never had any occult or esoteric system of doctrine which it withheld from the multitudes,—what happens? Forthwith, "Esoteric Buddhism" receives, metaphorically speaking, a black eye; the Theosophical Society, a kick or two; and finally, the gates of the journalistic poultry-yard being flung wide open, a vehement *sortie* against "Blavatsky" & Co. is effected by a flock of irritated geese sallying therefrom to hiss and peck at the theosophical heels. "Our Ancestors, have saved Rome!" they cackle, "let us save the British Empire from these *pretenders* to Buddhist knowledge!" Again: a lucky "correspondent" gets admittance into the sanctum of Professor Bastian. The German ethnologist, "dressed like an alchemist of the middle ages" and smiling at "questions concerning the *trances* of famous Fakirs," proceeds to inform the interviewer that such trances never last more than "from five to six hours." This—the alchemist-like dress, we suppose, helping to bring about a happy association of ideas—leads *presto,* in the American "Sabbath-breaking paper," to a stern rebuke to our address. We read on the following day:—

> "The famous Fakirs. . . . however they may have imposed on other travellers, certainly did not do so on this quiet little German philosopher, Madame Blavatsky to the contrary notwithstanding."

Very well. And yet Professor Bastian, all the "correspondents" to the contrary notwithstanding, lays himself widely open to a most damaging criticism from the standpoint of *fact* and *truth*. Furthermore, we doubt whether Professor Bastian, a learned ethnologist, would ever refer to Hindu Yogis as *Fakirs*—the latter appellation being strictly limited and belonging only to *Mussulman* devotees.

We doubt, still more, whether Professor Bastian, an accurate German, would deny the frequent occurrence of the phenomenon that Yogis and these same "Fakirs," remain in deep, death-like trance for days, and sometimes for weeks; or even that the former have been occasionally buried for forty consecutive days, and recalled to life again at the end of that period, as witnessed by Sir Claude Wade and others.

But all this is too ancient and too well authenticated history, to need substantiation. When "correspondents" will have learned the meaning, as well as the spelling of the term *dhyana*—which the said "correspondent" writes *diana*—we may talk with them of Yogis and Fakirs, pointing out to them the great difference between the two. Meanwhile, we may kindly leave them to their own hazy ideas: they are the "Innocents Abroad" in the realm of the far Orient, the blind led by the blind, and theosophical charity extends even to critics and hereditary foes.

But there are certain other things which we cannot leave uncontradicted. While week after week, and day after day, the "Innocents" lost in the theosophical labyrinths, publish their own harmless fibs—"slight expansions of truth" somebody called them—they also often supplement them by the wicked and malicious falsehoods of casual correspondents—ex-members of the T. S. and their friends generally. These falsehoods generated in, and evolved from the depths of the inner consciousness of our relentless enemies, cannot be so easily disregarded. Although, since they hang like Mahommed's coffin in the emptiness of rootless space, and so are a *denial* in themselves, yet they are so maliciously interspersed with hideous lies built on *popular* and already strongly-rooted prejudices that, if left uncontradicted, they would work the most terrible mischief. Lies are ever more readily accepted than truth, and are given up with more difficulty. They darken the horizons of theosophical centres, and prevent unprejudiced people from learning the exact truth about theosophy and its herald, the Theosophical Society. How terribly malicious and revengeful some of these enemies are, is evidenced by the fact that certain of them do not hesitate to perform a moral *hari-kari* upon themselves; to slay their own reputations for truthfulness for the pleasure of hitting hard—or *trying*, at all events, to hit—those whom they hate. Why this hatred? Simply because a calumny, a wicked, groundless slander is often forgiven, and even forgotten; a *truth* told—never! Prevented from disproving that truth, for good reasons, their hatred is kindled—for we hate only what *we fear*. Thus they will *invent a lie*, cunningly grafting it on some utterly false, but nevertheless popular accusation, and raise anew the cry, "It's the cat, the ca-a-t, the ca-a-at!" . . .

Success in such a policy depends, you see, on temperament and—*impudence*. We have a friend, who will never go to the trouble of persuading anyone to believe him on his "aye" or his

"nay." But, whenever he remarks that his words are doubted, he will say, in the quietest and most innocent way possible, "You know well *I am too impudent* to lie!" There is a great psychological truth hidden under this seeming paradox. Impudence often originates from two entirely opposite feelings: fearlessness and cowardice. A brave man will never lie; a coward lies to cover the fact of his being one, and a liar into the bargain. Such a character will never confess himself at fault no more than a vain man will; hence, whatever mischance happens to either, they will always try to lay it at the door of somebody else. It requires a great nobility of character, or a firm sense of one's duty, to confess one's mistakes and faults. Therefore, a scapegoat is generally chosen, upon whose head the sins of the guilty are placed by the transgressors. This scapegoat becomes gradually "the cat."

Now the Theosophical Society has its own special, so to speak, its "family cat," on which are heaped all the past, present and future iniquities of its Fellows. Whether an F. T. S. quarrels with his mother-in-law, lets his hair grow, forgets to pay his debts, or falls off from grace and theosophical association, owing to personal or family reasons, wounded vanity, or what not: *presto* comes the cry—whether in Europe, Asia, America or elsewhere—*It's the cat.* Look at this F. T. S.; he is writhing in the pangs of balked ambition. His desire to reign supreme over his fellow members is frustrated; and finding himself disappointed—it is on the "cat" that he is now venting his wrath. "The grapes are sour," he declares, because "the cat" would not cut them for him, nor would she mew in tune to his fiddle. Hence, the Vine has "worn itself *too thin.*" Behold that other "star" of Theosophy, smarting under another kind of grievance—unnamed, because unnamable. Hatred—"till one be lost for ever"—rages in this *brotherly* heart. Pouncing like a bird of prey upon its chosen victim—which it would carry far, far up into the clouds to kill it with the more certainty when it lets it drop—the would-be avenger of his own imaginary wrongs remains utterly blind to the fact, that by raising his chosen victim so high he only elevates it the more above all men. You cannot kill that which you hate, O blind hater, whatever the height you dash it down from; the "cat" has nine lives, good friend, and will ever fall on to its feet.

There are a few articles of belief among the best theosophists, the bare mention of which produces upon certain persons and classes of society the effect of a red rag on an infuriated bull. One of these is our belief—very harmless and innocent *per se*—in the existence of very wise and holy personages, whom some call their Masters, while others refer to them as "Mahatmas."

Now, these may or may not actually exist—(we say they do); they may or may not be as wise, or possess altogether the wonderful powers ascribed to, and claimed for them. All this is a question of *personal knowledge*—or, in some cases, faith. Yet, there are the 350,000,000 of India alone who believe since time immemorial in their great Yogis and Mahatmas, and who feel as certain of their

existence in every age, from countless centuries back down to the present day, as they feel sure of their own lives. Are they to be treated for this as superstitious, self-deceived fools? Are they more entitled to this epithet than the Christians of every church who believe respectively in past and present Apostles, in Saints, Sages, Patriarchs and Prophets?

Let that be as it will; the reader must realize that the present writer entertains no desire to force such a belief on any one unwilling to accept it, let him be a layman or a theosophist. The attempt was foolishly made a few years back in all truth and sincerity, and—it has failed. More than this, the revered names were, from the first, so desecrated by friend and foe, that the once almost irresistible desire to bring the actual truth home to some who needed *living ideals* the most, has gradually weakened since then. It is now replaced by a passionate regret for having ever exhumed them from the twilight of legendary lore, into that of broad daylight.

The wise warning:—

> "Give not that which is holy to the dogs,
> Neither cast ye your pearls before swine—"

is now impressed in letters of fire on the heart of those guilty of having made of the "Masters" public property. Thus the wisdom of the Hindo-Buddhist allegorical teaching which says, "There can be no Mahatmas, no Arhats, during the *Kali yuga,*" is vindicated. That *which is not believed in, does not exist.* Arhats and Mahatmas having been declared by the majority of Western people as non-existent, as a *fabrication*—do not exist for the unbelievers.

"The Great Pan is dead!" wailed the mysterious voice over the Ionian Sea, and forthwith plunged Tiberius and the pagan world into despair. The nascent Nazarenes rejoiced and attributed that death to the new "God." Fools, both, who little suspected that *Pan*—the "All Nature"—could not die. That that which *had* died was only their fiction, the horned monster with the legs of a goat, the "god" of shepherds and of priests who lived upon the popular superstition, and made profit of the PAN of *their own making.* TRUTH can never die.

We greatly rejoice in thinking that the "Mahatmas" of those who sought to build their own ephemeral reputation upon them and tried to stick them as a peacock's feather in their hats—are also dead. The "adepts" of wild hallucinations, and too wide-awake, ambitious purposes; the Hindu sages 1,000 years old; the "mysterious strangers," and the *tutti quanti* transformed into convenient pegs whereon to hang—one, "orders" inspired by his own nauseous vices; another, his own selfish purposes; a third, a mocking image from the astral light—are now as dead as the "god Pan," or the proverbial door-nail. They have vanished into thin air as all *un*clean "hoaxes" must. Those who invented the "Mahatmas" 1,000 years old, seeing the *hoax* will not pay, may well say they "have recovered from the fascination and taken their proper stand." And these are

welcome and *sure "to* come out and turn upon all *their dupes* the vials of *their* sarcasm," though *it will never be the last act of their* "life's drama." For the *true*, the *genuine* "Masters," whose real names have, fortunately, never been given out, cannot be created and killed at the beck and call of the sweet will of any "opportunist," whether inside or outside of the T. S. It is only the *Pans* of the modern nymphs and the *Luperci*, the greedy priests of the Arcadian god, who are, let us hope—dead and buried.

This cry, "it is the cat!" will end by making the Theosophical Society's "scape-goat" quite proud. It has already ceased to worry the victim, and now it is even becoming welcome and is certainly a very hopeful sign for the cause. Censure is hard when deserved; whenever unmerited it only shows that there is in the persecuted party something more than in the persecutors. It is the number of enemies and the degree of their fierceness, that generally decide on the merits and value of those they would brush off the face of the earth if they could. And, therefore, we close with this quotation from old Addison:

"Censure, says an ingenious author, is the tax a man pays to the public for being eminent. It is a folly for an eminent man to think of escaping it, and a weakness to be affected by it. All the illustrious persons of antiquity, and, indeed, of every age in the world, have passed through this fiery persecution. There is no defence against reproach but obscurity; it is a kind of concomitant to greatness, as satires and invectives were an essential part of a Roman triumph."

Dear, kind enemies of the "Tartarian termagant" how hard you do work to add to her eminence and greatness, to be sure!

OF OCCULT POWERS AND THEIR ACQUIREMENT*

THERE are thousands of people in the United States, as well in the ranks of the Society as outside, who believe that there are certain extraordinary occult powers to be encompassed by man. Such powers as thought reading, seeing events yet to come, unveiling the motives of others, apportation of objects, and the like, are those most sought after, and nearly all desired with a selfish end in view. The future is inquired into so as to enable one to speculate in stocks and another to circumvent competitors. These longings are pandered to here and there by men and societies who hold out delusive hopes to their dupes that, by the payment of money, the powers of nature may be invoked.

* This article was first printed by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path* for February, 1889.

Even some of our own members have not been guiltless of seeking after such wonderful fruit of knowledge with those who would barter the Almighty, if they could, for gold.

Another class of earnest theosophists, however, have taken a different ground. They have thought that certain Adepts who really possess power over nature, who can both see and hear through all space, who can transport solid objects through space and cause written messages to appear at a distance with beautiful sounds of astral bells, ought to intervene, and by the exercise of the same power make these earnest disciples hear sounds ordinarily called occult, and thus easily transmit information and help without the aid of telegraph or mailboat. But that these Beings will not do this has been stated over and over again; for the kingdom of heaven is not given away, it must be "taken by violence." It lies there before us to be entered upon and occupied, but that can be only after a battle which, when won, entitles the victor to remain in undisturbed possession.

As many have seemed to forget these rules, I thought it well to offer them the following words from one of those very Adepts they seek to meet:

"The educing of the faculty of hearing occult sounds would be not at all the easy matter you imagine. It was never done to any one of us, for the iron rule *is* that what powers one gets he *must himself acquire,* and when acquired and ready for use, the powers lie dumb and dormant in their potentiality like the wheels in a music box, and only then is it easy to wind the key and start them. * * * Yet every earnestly-disposed man *may* acquire such powers practically; that is the finality of it. There are no more distinctions of persons in this than there are as to whom the sun shall shine upon or the air give vitality to. There are the powers of all nature before you; *take what you can.*"

This is perfectly clear and strictly according to the Secret Canon. "When the materials are all prepared and ready, the architect shall appear"; and when we have *acquired* the powers we seek, by educing them ourselves from our inner being, the Master will then be ready and able to start into exercise that which we have obtained.

But—even here is an important point. This. If the Master can, so to say, wind the key and thus start the machinery, He can also refuse to give the necessary impulse. For reasons that have to do with the motives and life of students, it may be advisable for a while not to permit the exercise of these powers which "lie dumb and dormant in their potentiality." To sanction their use might in one lead to the ruin of other lives, or in another to personal disaster and retardation of true progress.

Therefore the Master says that quite often he may not only refuse to give the start, but yet further may prevent the wheels from moving.

THERE ARE THE POWERS OF ALL NATURE BEFORE YOU; TAKE WHAT YOU CAN.

RODRIGUEZ UNDIANO.

PSYCHIC AND NOETIC ACTION*

". . . . . I made man just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall,
Such I created all th' ethereal powers
And spirits, both them who stood and them who fail'd,
Truly, they stood who stood, and fell who fell . . ."
MILTON.

". . . . . The assumption that the *mind is a real being,* which can be acted upon by the brain, and which can act on the body through the brain, is the only one compatible with all the facts of experience."—GEORGE T. LADD, *in the "Elements of Physiological Psychology".*

I.

A NEW influence, a breath, a sound—"as of a rushing mighty wind"—has suddenly swept over a few Theosophical heads. An idea, vague at first, grew in time into a very definite form, and now seems to be working very busily in the minds of some of our members. It is this: if we would make converts the few ex-occult teachings, which are destined to see the light of publicity, should be made, henceforward, *more subservient to, if not entirely at one with modern science.* It is urged that the so-called *esoteric*[1] (or *late* esoteric) cosmogony, anthropology, ethnology, geology—psychology and, foremost of all, metaphysics—having been *adapted into* making obeisance to modern (hence *materialistic*) thought, should never henceforth be allowed to contradict (not *openly,* at all events) "scientific philosophy". The latter, we suppose, means the fundamental and accepted views of the great German schools, or of Mr. Herbert Spencer and some other English stars of lesser magnitude; and not only these, but also the deductions that may be drawn from them by their more or less instructed disciples.

A large undertaking this, truly; and one, moreover, in perfect conformity with the policy of the mediæval Casuists,** who distorted truth and even suppressed it, if it clashed with *divine Revelation.* Useless to say that we decline the compromise. It is quite possible—nay, probable and almost unavoidable—that "the mistakes made" in the rendering of such abstruse metaphysical tenets as those contained in Eastern Occultism, should be "frequent and often important". But then all such have to be traced back to the interpreters, not to the system itself. They have to be corrected on the authority of the same Doctrine, checked by the teachings grown on the rich and steady soil of *Gupta Vidya,* not by the speculations that blossom forth to-day, to die to-morrow—on the shifting sands of modern scientific guess-work, especially in all that relates to psychology and mental phenomena. Holding to our motto, "There

*This article was first printed by H. P. Blavatsky in *Lucifer* for October, 1890.

[1]We say "so-called," because nothing of what has been given out publicly or in print can any longer be termed *esoteric.*

** Both Protestant & Catholic — about 16th century
P. believed in freedom of man's conscience

is no religion higher than truth", we refuse most decidedly to pander to *physical* science. Yet, we may say this: If the so-called *exact* sciences limited their activity only to the physical realm of nature; if they concerned themselves strictly with surgery, chemistry—up to its legitimate boundaries, and with physiology—so far as the latter relates to the structure of our corporeal frame, then the Occultists would be the first to seek help in modern sciences, however many their blunders and mistakes. But once that over-stepping material Nature the physiologists of the modern "animalistic"* school pretend to meddle with, and deliver *ex cathedrâ dicta* on, the higher functions and phenomena of the mind, saying that a careful analysis brings them to a firm conviction that no more than the animal is man a *free-agent,* far less a responsible one—then the Occultist has a far greater right than the average modern "Idealist" to protest. And the Occultist asserts that no materialist—a prejudiced and one-sided witness at best—can claim any authority in the question of mental physiology, or that which is now called by him the *physiology of the soul.* No such noun can be applied to the word "soul", unless, indeed, by soul only the lower, *psychic* mind is meant, or that which develops in man (proportionally with the perfection of his brain) into *intellect,* and in the animal into a *higher* instinct. But since the great Charles Darwin taught that "our *ideas* are animal motions of the organ of sense" everything becomes possible to the modern physiologist.

Thus, to the great distress of our scientifically inclined Fellows, it is once more *Lucifer's* duty to show how far we are at loggerheads with exact science, or shall we say, how far the conclusions of that science are drifting away from truth and fact. By "science" we mean, of course, the majority of the men of science; the best minority, we are happy to say, is on our side, at least as far as free-will in man and the immateriality of the mind are concerned. The study of the "Physiology" of the Soul, of the Will in man and of his *higher Consciousness* from the standpoint of genius and its manifesting faculties, can never be summarized into a system of general ideas represented by brief formulæ; no more than the *psychology of material nature* can have its manifold mysteries solved by the mere analysis of its physical phenomena *There is no special organ of will,* any more than there is a *physical basis* for the activities of self-consciousness.

"If the question is pressed as to the *physical basis* for the activities of self-consciousness, no answer can be given or suggested. . . . From its very nature, that marvellous verifying *actus* of mind in which it recognizes

*"Animalism" is quite an appropriate word to use (whoever invented it) as a contrast to Mr. Tylor's term "animism," which he applied to all the "*Lower* Races" of mankind who believe the soul a distinct entity. He finds that the words *psyche, pneuma, animus, spiritus,* etc., all belong to the same cycle of superstition in "the lower stages of culture," Professor A. Bain dubbing all these distinctions, moreover, as a "plurality of souls" and a "double materialism." This is the more curious as the learned author of "Mind and Body" speaks as disparagingly of Darwin's "materialism" in *Zoonomia,* wherein the founder of modern Evolution defines the word *idea* as "contracting a motion, or configuration of the fibres which constitute the immediate organ of Sense" ("Mind and Body," p. 190, Note).

the states as its own, can have no analogous or corresponding material substratum. It is impossible to specify any physiological process representing this unifying *actus*; it is even impossible to imagine how the description of any such process could be brought into intelligible relation with this unique mental power."*

Thus, the whole conclave of psycho-physiologists may be challenged to correctly define Consciousness, and they are sure to fail, because Self-consciousness belongs alone to man and proceeds from the SELF, the higher Manas. Only, whereas the psychic element (or *Kama-manas*)[1] is common to both the animal and the human being—the far higher degree of its development in the latter resting merely on the greater perfection and sensitiveness of his cerebral cells—no physiologist, not even the cleverest, will ever be able to solve the mystery of the human mind, in its highest spiritual manifestation, or in its dual aspect of the *psychic* and the *noëtic* (or the *manasic*),[2] or even to comprehend the intricacies of the former on the purely material plane—unless he knows something of, and is prepared to admit the presence of this dual element. This means that he would have to admit a lower (animal), and a higher (or divine) mind in man, or what is known in Occultism as the "personal" and the "impersonal" *Egos*. For, between the *psychic* and the *noëtic*, between the *Personality* and the *Individuality*, there exists the same abyss as between a "Jack the Ripper", and a holy Buddha. Unless the physiologist accepts all this, we say, he will ever be led into a quagmire. We intend to prove it.

As all know, the great majority of our learned "Didymi" reject the idea of free-will. Now this question is a problem that has occupied the minds of thinkers for ages; every school of thought having taken it up in turn and left it as far from solution as ever. And yet, placed as it is in the foremost ranks of philosophical quandaries, the modern "psycho-physiologists" claim in the coolest and most bumptious way to have cut the Gordian knot for ever. For them the feeling of personal free agency is an error, an illusion, "the collective hallucination of mankind". This conviction starts from the principle that no mental activity is possible without a brain, and that there can be no brain without a body. As the latter is, moreover, subject to the general laws of a material world where all is based on necessity, and where there is no spontaneity, our modern psycho-physiologist has *nolens volens* to repudiate any self-spontaneity in human action. Here we have, for instance, a Lausanne professor of physiology, A. A. Herzen, to whom the claim of free-will in man appears as the most *unscientific* absurdity. Says this oracle:—

"In the boundless physical and chemical laboratory that surrounds man, organic life represents quite an unimportant group of

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**Physiological Psychology, etc.*, p. 545, by George T. Ladd, Professor of Philosophy in Yale University.

[1] Or what the Kabalists call *Nephesh*, the "breath of life."

[2] The Sanskrit word *Manas* (Mind) is used by us in preference to the Greek *Nous* (noëtic) because the latter word having been so imperfectly understood in philosophy, suggests no definite meaning.

phenomena; and amongst the latter, the place occupied by life having reached to the stage of consciousness, is so minute that it is absurd to exclude man from the sphere of action of a general law, in order to allow in him the existence of a subjective spontaneity or a free will standing outside of that law"—(*Psychophysiologie Générale.*)

For the Occultist who knows the difference between the psychic and the noëtic elements in man, this is pure trash, notwithstanding its sound scientific basis. For when the author puts the question—if psychic phenomena do not represent the results of an action of a molecular character whither then does motion disappear after reaching the sensory centres?—we answer that we never denied the fact. But what has this to do with a free-will? That every phenomenon in the visible Universe has its genesis in motion, is an old axiom in Occultism; nor do we doubt that the psycho-physiologist would place himself at logger-heads with the whole conclave of exact scientists were he to allow the idea that at a given moment a whole series of physical phenomena may disappear in the vacuum. Therefore, when the author of the work cited maintains that the said force does not disappear upon reaching the highest nervous centres, but that it is forthwith transformed into another series, viz., that of psychic manifestations, into thought, feeling, and consciousness, just as this same psychic force when applied to produce some work of a physical (*e.g.*, muscular) character gets transformed into the latter—Occultism supports him, for it is the first to say that all psychic activity, from its lowest to its highest manifestations, is "nothing but—motion".

Yes; it *is* MOTION; but not all "molecular" motion, as the writer means us to infer. Motion as the GREAT BREATH (*vide* "Secret Doctrine", vol. i, *sub voce*)—*ergo "sound" at the same time*—is the substratum of Kosmic-Motion. It is beginningless and endless, the one *eternal life*, the basis and genesis of the subjective and the objective universe; for LIFE (or Be-ness) is the *fons et origo* of existence or being. But molecular motion is the lowest and most material of its finite manifestations. And if the general law of the conservation of energy leads modern science to the conclusion that psychic activity only represents a special form of motion, this same law, guiding the Occultists, leads them also to the same conviction—and to something else besides, which psycho-physiology leaves entirely out of all consideration. If the latter has discovered only in this century that psychic (we say even spiritual) action is subject to the same general and immutable laws of motion as any other phenomenon manifested in the objective realm of Kosmos, and that in both the organic and the *inorganic* (*?*) worlds every manifestation, whether conscious or unconscious, represents but the result of a collectivity of causes, then in Occult philosophy this represents merely the A, B, C, of its science. "All the world is in the *Swara*; *Swara* is the Spirit itself"—the ONE LIFE or *motion*, say the old books of Hindu Occult philosophy. "The proper translation of the

word *Swara* is the *current of the life wave*", says the author of "Nature's Finer Forces",* and he goes on to explain:

"It is that wavy motion which is the cause of the evolution of cosmic undifferentiated matter into the differentiated universe. . . . From whence does this motion come? This motion is the spirit itself. The word *atma* (universal soul) used in the book (*vide infra*), itself carries the idea of eternal motion, coming as it does from the root, AT, or eternal motion; and it may be significantly remarked, that the root AT is connected with, is in fact simply another form of, the roots AH, breath, and AS, being. All these roots have for their origin the sound produced by the breath of animals (living beings) . . . . The primeval current of the live-wave is then the same which assumes in man the form of inspiratory and expiratory motion of the lungs, and this is the all-pervading source of the evolution and involution of the universe. . . ."

So much about *motion* and the "conservation of energy" from old *books on magic* written and taught ages before the birth of inductive and exact modern science. For what does the latter say more than these books in speaking, for instance, about animal *mechanism*, when it says:—

"From the visible atom to the celestial body lost in space, *everything is subject to motion* . . . . kept at a definite distance one from the other, in proportion to the motion which animates them, the molecules present constant relations, which they lose only by the addition or the subtraction of a certain quantity of motion."[1]

But Occultism says more than this. While making of motion on *the material plane* and of the conservation of energy, two fundamental laws, or rather two aspects of the same omnipresent law—*Swara*, it denies point blank that these have anything to do with the *free-will* of man which belongs to quite a different plane. The author of "Psychophysiologie Générale", treating of his *discovery* that psychic action is but motion, and the result of a collectivity of causes—remarks that as it is so, there cannot be any further discussion upon spontaneity—in the sense of any native internal proneness created by the human organism; and adds that the above puts an end to all claim for *free-will!* The Occultist denies the conclusion. The actual fact of man's psychic (we say *manasic* or noëtic) *individuality* is a sufficient warrant against the assumption; for in the case of this conclusion being correct, or being indeed, as the author expresses it, the *collective hallucination of the whole mankind throughout the ages*, there would be an end also to psychic individuality.

Now by "psychic" individuality we mean that self-determining power which enables man to override circumstances. Place half a

**The Theosophist*, Feb., 1888, p. 275, by Rama Prasad, President of the *Meerut Theosophical Society*. As the Occult book cited by him says: "It is the *Swara* that has given form to the *first accumulations of the divisions* of the universe; the *Swara* causes evolution and involution; the *Swara* is God, or more properly the *Great Power* itself (*Maheshwara*). The *Swara* is the manifestation of the impression on matter of that power which in man is known to us as *the power which knows itself* (mental and *psychic* consciousness). It is to be understood that the action of this power never ceases. . . . . It is unchangeable existence"—and this is the "Motion" of the Scientists and the universal *Breath of Life* of the Occultists.

[1] *"Animal Mechanism," a treatise on terrestrial and aerial locomotion.* By E. J. Marey, Prof. at the College of France, and Member of the Academy of Medicine.

dozen animals of the same species under the same circumstances, and their actions while not identical, will be closely similar; place half a dozen men under the same circumstances and their actions will be as different as their characters, *i. e.*, their *psychic individuality.*

But if instead of "psychic" we call it the higher Self-conscious Will, then having been shown by the science of psycho-physiology itself that *will has no special organ,* how will the materialists connect it with "molecular" motion at all? As Professor George T. Ladd says:

"The phenomena of human consciousness must be regarded as activities of some other form of Real Being than the moving molecules of the brain. They require a subject or ground which is in its nature unlike the phosphorized fats of the central masses, the aggregated nerve-fibres of nerve-cells of the cerebral cortex. This Real Being thus manifested immediately to itself in the phenomena of consciousness, and indirectly to others through the bodily changes, is the *Mind* (*manas*). To it the mental phenomena are to be attributed as showing what it *is* by what it *does.* The so-called mental 'faculties' are only the *modes of the behaviour* in consciousness of this real being. We actually find, by the only method available, that this real being called Mind believes in certain perpetually recurring modes: therefore, we attribute to it certain faculties . . . . Mental faculties are not entities that have an existence of themselves . . . . They are the modes of the behaviour in consciousness of the mind. And the very nature of the classifying acts which lead to their being distinguished, is explicable only upon the assumption that *a Real being called Mind exists,* and is to be distinguished from the real beings known as the physical molecules of the brain's nervous mass."*

And having shown that we have to regard consciousness *as a unit* (another occult proposition) the author adds:

"We conclude, then, from the previous considerations: *the subject of all the states of consciousness is a real unit-being, called Mind; which is of non-material nature, and acts and develops according to laws of its own, but is specially correlated with certain material molecules and masses forming the substance of the Brain."*[1]

This "Mind" is *manas,* or rather its lower reflection, which whenever it disconnects itself, for the time being, with *kama,* becomes the guide of the highest mental faculties, and is the organ of the free-will in physical man. Therefore, this assumption of the newest psycho-physiology is uncalled for, and the apparent impossibility of reconciling the existence of free-will with the law of the conservation of energy is—a pure fallacy. This was well shown in the "Scientific Letters" of "Elpay" in a criticism of the work. But to prove it finally and set the whole question definitely at rest, does not even require so high an interference (high for us, at any rate) as the Occult laws, but simply a little common sense. Let us analyze the question dispassionately.

It is postulated by one man, presumably a scientist, that because "psychic action is found subject to the general and immutable laws

*The higher *manas* or "Ego" (*Kshetrajna*) is the "Silent Spectator," and the voluntary "sacrificial victim": the lower manas, its representative—a tyrannical despot, truly.

[1] *"Elements of Physiological Psychology.* A treatise of the activities and nature of the mind, from the Physical and Experimental Point of View, pp. 606 and 613.

of motion, there is, therefore, *no free will in man*". The "analytical method of exact sciences" has demonstrated it, and materialistic scientists have decreed to "pass the resolution" that the fact should be so accepted by their followers. But there are other and far greater scientists who thought differently. For instance, Sir William Lawrence, the eminent surgeon, declared in his lectures* that:—

"The philosophical doctrine of the soul, and its separate existence, has nothing to do with this physiological question, but rests on a species of proof altogether different. These sublime dogmas could never have been brought to light by the labours of the anatomist and physiologist. An immaterial and spiritual being could not have been discovered amid the blood and filth of the dissecting room."

Now, let us examine on the testimony of the materialist how this universal solvent called the "analytical method" is applied in this special case. The author of the *Psychophysiologie* decomposes psychic activity into its compound elements, traces them back to motion, and, failing to find in them the slightest trace of free-will or spontaneity, jumps at the conclusion that the latter have no existence in general; nor are they to be found in that psychic activity which he has just decomposed. "Are not the fallacy and error of such an unscientific proceeding self-evident?", asks his critic; and then argues very correctly that:—

"At this rate, and starting from the standpoint of this analytical method, one would have an equal right to deny every phenomenon in nature from first to last. For, do not sound and light, heat and electricity, like all other chemical processes, once decomposed into their respective elements, lead the experimenter back to the same motion, wherein all the peculiarities of the given elements disappear leaving behind them only 'the vibrations of molecules'? But does it necessarily follow that for all that, heat, light, electricity—are but illusions instead of the actual manifestations of the peculiarities of our real world. Such peculiarities are not, of course, to be found in compound elements, simply because we cannot expect that a part should contain, from first to last, the properties of the whole. What should we say of a chemist, who, having decomposed water into its compounds, hydrogen and oxygen, without finding in them the special characteristics of water would maintain that such did not exist at all nor could they be found in water? What of an antiquary who upon examining distributed type and finding no sense in every separate letter, should assert that there was no such thing as sense to be found in any printed document? And does not the author of "Psycho-physiology" act just in this way when he denies the existence of free-will or self-spontaneity in man, on the grounds that this distinctive faculty of the highest psychic activity is absent from those compound elements which he has analysed?"

Most undeniably no separate piece of brick, of wood, or iron, each of which has once been a part of a building now in ruins, can be expected to preserve the smallest trace of the architecture of that building—in the hands of the chemist, at any rate; though it would in those of a *psychometer*, a faculty by the bye, which demonstrates far more powerfully the law of the conservation of energy than any physical science does, and shows it acting as much in the

*W. Lawrence. Lectures on Comparative Anatomy, Physiology, Zoology, and the Natural History of Man, 8vo. London, 1848, p 6.

subjective or psychic worlds as on the objective and material planes. The genesis of sound, on this plane, has to be traced back to the same motion, and the same correlation of forces is at play during the phenomenon as in the case of every other manifestation. Shall the physicist, then, who decomposes sound into its compound element of vibrations and fails to find in them any harmony or special melody, deny the existence of the latter? And does not this prove that the analytical method having to deal exclusively with the elements, and nothing to do with their *combinations,* leads the physicist to talk very glibly about motion, vibration, and what not, and to make him entirely lose sight of the *harmony produced by certain combinations of that motion* or the "harmony of vibrations"? Criticism, then, is right in accusing Materialistic psycho-physiology of neglecting these all-important distinctions; in maintaining that if a careful observation of facts is a duty in the simplest physical phenomena, how much more should it be so when applied to such complex and important questions as psychic force and faculties? And yet in most cases all such essential differences are overlooked, and the analytical method is applied in a most arbitrary and prejudiced way. What wonder, then, if, in carrying back psychic action to its basic elements of motion, the psycho-physiologist depriving it during the process of all its essential characteristics, should destroy it; and having destroyed it, it only stands to reason that he is unable to find that which exists in it no longer. He forgets, in short, or rather purposely ignores the fact, that though, like all other phenomena on the material plane, psychic manifestations *must* be related in their final analysis to the world of vibration (*"sound" being the substratum of universal Akasa*), yet, in their origin, they belong to *a different and a higher World* of HARMONY. Elpay has a few severe sentences against the assumptions of those he calls "physico-biologists" which are worthy of note.

> Unconscious of their error, the psycho-physiologists identify the compound elements of psychic activity with that activity itself: hence the conclusion from the standpoint of the analytical method, that the highest, distinctive speciality of the human soul—free-will, spontaneity—is an illusion, and no psychic reality. But as we have just shown, such identification not only has nothing in common with exact science, but is simply impermissible, as it clashes with all the fundamental laws of logic, in consequence of which all these so-called physico-biological deductions emanating from the said identification vanish into thin air. Thus to trace psychic action primarily to motion, means in no way to prove the "illusion of free-will". And, as in the case of water, whose specific qualities cannot be deprived of their reality although they are not to be found in its compound gases, so with regard to the specific property of psychic action: its spontaneity cannot be refused to psychic reality, though this property is not contained in those finite elements into which the psycho-physiologist dismembers the activity in question under his mental scalpel.

This method is "a distinctive feature of modern science in its endeavour to satisfy inquiry into the *nature* of the objects of its investigation by a detailed description of their *development*", says

G. T. Ladd. And the author of "The Elements of Physiological Psychology", adds:—

> The universal process of "Becoming" has been almost personified and deified so as to make it the true ground of all finite and concrete existence. . . . . The attempt is made to refer all the so-called development of the mind to the evolution of the substance of the brain, under purely physical and mechanical causes. This attempt, then, denies that any real unit-being called the Mind needs to be assumed as undergoing a process of development according to laws of its own. . . . . On the other hand, all attempts to account for the orderly increase in complexity and comprehensiveness of the mental phenomena by tracing the physical evolution of the brain are wholly unsatisfactory to many minds. We have no hesitation in classing ourselves among this number. Those facts of experience which show a correspondence in the order of the development of the body and the mind, and even a certain necessary dependence of the latter upon the former, are, of course, to be admitted; but they are equally compatible with another view of the mind's development. This other view has the additional advantages that it makes room for many other facts of experience which are very difficult of reconciliation with any materialistic theory. On the whole, *the history of each individual's experiences is such as requires the assumption that a real unit-being (a Mind) is undergoing a process of development, in relation to the changing condition or evolution of the brain, and yet in accordance with a nature and laws of its own*" (p. 616).

How closely this last "assumption" of science approaches the teachings of the Occult philosophy will be shown in Part II of this article. Meanwhile, we may close with an answer to the latest materialistic fallacy, which may be summarised in a few words. As every psychic action has for its substratum the nervous elements whose existence it postulates, and outside which it cannot act; as the activity of the nervous elements are only molecular motion, there is therefore no need to invent a special and psychic Force for the explanation of our brain work. *Free Will would force* Science to postulate an invisible *Free-Willer,* a creator of that special Force.

We agree: "not the slightest need", of a creator of "that special" or any other Force. Nor has any one ever claimed such an absurdity. But between *creating* and *guiding,* there is a difference, and the latter implies in no way any creation of the energy of motion, or, indeed, of any special energy. *Psychic* mind (in contradistinction to manasic or noëtic mind) only transforms this energy of the "unit-being" according to "a nature and laws of its own"—to use Ladd's felicitous expression. The "unit-being" creates nothing, but only causes a natural correlation in accordance with both the physical laws and *laws of its own;* having to use the Force, it guides its direction, choosing the paths along which it will proceed, and stimulating it to action. And, as its activity is *sui generis,* and independent, it carries this energy from this world of disharmony into its own sphere of harmony. Were it not *independent* it could not do so. As it is, the freedom of man's will is beyond doubt or cavil. Therefore, as already observed, there is no question of creation, but simply of *guidance.* Because the sailor at the wheel does not create the steam in the engine, shall we say that he does not direct the vessel?

And, because we refuse to accept the fallacies of some psychophysiologists as the *last* word of science, do we furnish thereby a new proof that free-will is an *hallucination?* We deride the *animalistic* idea. How far more scientific and logical, besides being as poetical as it is grand, is the teaching in the *Kathopanishad,* which, in a beautiful and descriptive metaphor, says that: "The senses are the horses, body is the chariot, mind (*kama-manas*) is the reins, and intellect (or *free-will*) the charioteer." Verily, there is more *exact* science in the less important of the *Upanishads,* composed thousands of years ago, than in all the materialistic ravings of modern "physico-biology" and "psychophysiology" put together!

(*To be continued.*)

MECHANICAL THEOSOPHY*

THE EARNEST, devoted student can hardly believe that there exist any theosophists sincerely holding a belief in theosophical doctrines but who are, at the same time, found to have such a mechanical conception of them as permits one to retain undisturbed many old dogmas which are diametrically opposed to Theosophy. Yet we have such among us.

It comes about in this manner. First, Theosophy and its doctrines are well received because affording an explanation of the sorrows of life and a partial answer to the query, "Why is there anything?" Then a deeper examination and larger comprehension of the wide-embracing doctrines of Unity, Reïncarnation, Karma, the Sevenfold Classification, cause the person to perceive that either a means of reconciling certain old time dogmas and ideas with Theosophy must be found, or the disaster of giving the old ones up must fall on him.

Contemplating the criminal class and laws thereon the mechanical theosophist sees that perhaps the retaliatory law of Moses must be abandoned if the *modus vivendi* is not found. Ah! of course, are not men agents for karma? Hence the criminal who has murdered may be executed, may be violently thrust out of life, because that is his karma. Besides, Society must be protected. You cite the bearing on this of the subtile, inner, living nature of man. The mechanical theosophist necessarily must shut his eyes to something, so he replies that all of that has no bearing, the criminal did murder and must be murdered; it was his own fault. So at one sweep away goes compassion, and, as well, any scientific view of criminals and sudden death, in order that there may be a retaliatory Mosaïc principle, which is really bound up in our personal selfish natures.

Our naturalistic mechanician in the philosophy of life then finds quite a satisfaction. Why, of course, being in his own opinion

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a karmic agent he has the right to decide when he shall act as such. He will be a conscious agent. And so he executes karma upon his fellows according to his own desires and opinions; but he will not give to the beggar because that has been shown to encourage mendicity, nor would he rescue the drunken woman from the gutter because that is her fault and karma to be there. He assumes certainly to act justly, and perhaps in his narrowness of mind he thinks he is doing so, but real justice is not followed because it is unknown to him, being bound up in the long, invisible karmic streams of himself and his victim. However, he has saved his old theories and yet calls himself a theosophist.

Then again the mechanical view, being narrow and of necessity held by those who have no native knowledge of the occult, sees but the mechanical, outer operations of karma. Hence the subtile relation of parent and child, not only on this plane but on all the hidden planes of nature, is ignored. Instead of seeing that the child is of that parent just because of karma and for definite purposes; and that parentage is not merely for bringing an ego into this life but for wider and greater reasons; the mechanical and naturalistic theosophist is delighted to find that his Theosophy allows one to ignore the relation, and even to curse a parent, because parentage is held to be merely a door into life and nothing more.

Mechanical Theosophy is just as bad as that form of Christianity which permits a man to call his religion the religion of love, while he at the same time may grasp, retaliate, be selfish, and sanction his government's construction of death-dealing appliances and in going to war, although Jesus was opposed to both. Mechanical Theosophy would not condemn—as Christianity does not—those missionaries of Jesus who, finding themselves in danger of death in a land where the people do not want them, appeal to their government for warships, for soldiers, guns and forcible protection in a territory they do not own. It was the mechanical view of Christianity that created an Inquisition. This sort of religion has driven out the true religion of Jesus, and the mechanical view of our doctrines will, if persisted in, do the same for Theosophy.

Our philosophy of life is one grand whole, every part necessary and fitting into every other part. Every one of its doctrines can and must be carried to its ultimate conclusion. Its ethical application must proceed similarly. If it conflict with old opinions those must be cast off. It can never conflict with true morality. But it will with many views touching our dealings with one another. The spirit of Theosophy must be sought for; a sincere application of its principles to life and act should be made. Thus mechanical Theosophy, which inevitably leads—as in many cases it already has—to a negation of brotherhood, will be impossible, and instead there will be a living, actual Theosophy. This will then raise in our hearts the hope that at least a small nucleus of Universal Brotherhood may be formed before we of this generation are all dead.

William Q. Judge.

A HINDU CHELA'S DIARY*

(Continued from April)

"I HAVE been going over that message I received just after returning from the underground room, about not thinking yet too deeply upon what I saw there, but to let the lessons sink deep into my heart. Can it be true—must it not indeed be true—that we have periods in our development when rest must be taken for the physical brain in order to give it time as a much less comprehensive machine than these English college professors say it is, to assimilate what it has received, while at the same time the real brain—as we might say, the spiritual brain—is carrying on as busily as ever all the trains of thought cut off from the head. Of course this is contrary to this modern science we hear so much about now as about to be introduced into all Asia, but it is perfectly consistent for me.

"To reconsider the situation: I went with Kunâla to this underground place, and there saw and heard most instructive and solemn things. I return to my room, and begin to puzzle over them all, to revolve and re-revolve them in my mind, with a view to clearing all up and finding out what all may mean. But I am interrupted by a note from Kunâla directing me to stop this puzzling, and to let all I saw sink deep into my heart. Every word of his I regard with respect, and consider to hold a meaning, being never used by him with carelessness. So when he says, to let it sink into my 'heart,' in the very same sentence where he refers to my thinking part—the mind—why he must mean to separate my heart from my mind and to give to the heart a larger and greater power.

"Well, I obeyed the injunction, made myself, as far as I could, forget what I saw and what puzzled me and thought of other things. Presently, after a few days while one afternoon thinking over an episode related in the *Vishnu Purana,*[1] I happened to look up at an old house I was passing and stopped to examine a curious device on the porch; as I did this, it seemed as if either the device, or the house, or the circumstance itself, small as it was, opened up at once several avenues of thought about the underground room, made them all clear, showed me the conclusion as vividly as a well demonstrated and fully illustrated proposition, to my intense delight. Now could I perceive with plainness, that those few days which seemed perhaps wasted because withdrawn from contemplation of that scene and its lessons, had been with great advantage used by the spiritual man in unraveling the tangled skein, while the much praised brain had remained in idleness. All at once the *flash* came and with it knowledge.[2] But I must not depend upon these flashes,

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[1] An ancient Hindu book full of tales as well as doctrines.—[Ed. *Path.*]

[2] These *flashes* of thought are not unknown even in the scientific world, as, where in such a moment of lunacy, it was revealed to an English scientist, that there must be iron in the sun; and Edison gets his ideas thus.—[Ed. *Path.*]

I must give the brain and its governor, the material to work with. * * * * * * * * * * *

"Last night just as I was about to go to rest, the voice of Kunâla called me from outside and there I went at once. Looking steadily at me he said: 'we want to see you,' and as he spoke he gradually changed, or disappeared, or was absorbed, into the form of another man with awe-inspiring face and eyes, whose form apparently rose up from the material of Kunâla's body. At the same moment two others stood there also, dressed in the Tibetan costume; and one of them went into my room from which I had emerged. After saluting them reverently, and not knowing their object, I said to the greatest,

" 'Have you any orders to give?'

" 'If there are any they will be told to you without being asked,' he replied, 'stand still where you are.'

"Then he began to look at me fixedly. I felt a very pleasant sensation as if I was getting out of my body. I cannot tell now what time passed between that and what I am now to put down here. But I saw I was in a peculiar place. It was the upper end of————at the foot of the————range. Here was a place where there were only two houses just opposite to each other, and no other sign of habitation; from one of these came out the old faquir I saw at the Durga festival, but how changed, and yet the same: then so old, so repulsive; now so young, so glorious, so beautiful. He smiled upon me benignly and said:

" 'Never expect to see any one, but always be ready to answer if they speak to you; it is not wise to peer outside of yourself for the great followers of Vasudeva: look rather within.'

"The very words of the poor faquir!

"He then directed me to follow him.

"After going a short distance, of about half a mile or so, we came to a natural subterranean passage which is under the———— range. The path is very dangerous; the River———— flows underneath in all the fury of pent up waters, and a natural causeway exists upon which you may pass; only one person at a time can go there and one false step seals the fate of the traveller. Besides this causeway, there are several valleys to be crossed. After walking a considerable distance through this subterranean passage we came into an open plain in L————K. There stands a large massive building thousands of years old. In front of it is a huge Egyptian Tau. The building rests on seven big pillars each in the form of a pyramid. The entrance gate has a large triangular arch, and inside are various apartments. The building is so large that I think it can easily contain twenty thousand people. Some of the rooms were shown to me.

"This must be the central place for all those belonging to the————class, to go for initiation and stay the requisite period.

"Then we entered the great hall with my guide in front. He was youthful in form but in his eyes was the glance of ages. * * The grandeur and serenity of this place strikes the heart with awe. In the centre was what we would call an altar, but it must only be the place where focuses all the power, the intention, the knowledge and the influence of the assembly. For the seat, or place, or throne, occupied by the chief———the highest————has around it an indescribable glory, consisting of an effulgence which seemed to radiate from the one who occupied it. The surroundings of the throne were not gorgeous, nor was the spot itself in any way decorated—all the added magnificence was due altogether to the aura which emanated from Him sitting there. And over his head I thought I saw as I stood there, three golden triangles in the air above—Yes, they were there and seemed to glow with an unearthly brilliance that betokened their inspired origin. But neither they nor the light pervading the place, were produced by any mechanical means. As I looked about me I saw that others had a triangle, some two, and all with that peculiar brilliant light."

[Here again occurs a mass of symbols. It is apparent that just at this spot he desires to jot down the points of the initiation which he wished to remember. And I have to admit that I am not competent to elucidate their meaning. That must be left to our intuitions and possibly future experience in our own case.]

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"14th day of the new moon. The events of the night in the hall of initiation gave me much concern. Was it a dream? Am I self deluded? Can it be that I imagined all this? Such were the unworthy questions which flew behind each other across my mind for days after. Kunâla does not refer to the subject and I cannot put the question. Nor will I. I am determined, that, come what will, the solution must be reached by me, or given me voluntarily."

"Of what use to me will all the teachings and all the symbols be, if I cannot rise to that plane of penetrating knowledge, by which I shall myself, by myself, be able to solve this riddle, and know to discriminate the true from the false and the illusory? If I am unable to cut asunder these questioning doubts, these bonds of ignorance, it is proof that not yet have I risen to the plane situated above these doubts. * * *

Last night after all day chasing through my mental sky, these swift destroyers of stability—mental birds of passage—I lay down upon the bed, and as I did so, into my hearing fell these words:

"'Anxiety is the foe of knowledge; like unto a veil it falls down before the soul's eye; entertain it, and the veil only thicker grows; cast it out, and the sun of truth may dissipate the cloudy veil.'

"Admitting that truth; I determined to prohibit all anxiety. Well I knew that the prohibition issued from the depths of my heart, for that was master's voice, and confidence in his wisdom,

the self commanding nature of the words themselves, compelled me to complete reliance on the instruction. No sooner was the resolution formed, than down upon my face fell something which I seized at once in my hand. Lighting a lamp, before me was a note in the well known writing. Opening it, I read:

"'Nilakant. It was no dream. All was real, and more, that by your waking consciousness could not be retained, happened there. Reflect upon it all as reality, and from the slightest circumstance draw whatever lesson, whatever amount of knowledge you can. Never forget that your spiritual progress goes on quite often to yourself unknown. Two out of many hindrances to memory are anxiety and selfishness. Anxiety is a barrier constructed out of harsh and bitter materials. Selfishness is a fiery darkness that will burn up the memory's matrix. Bring then, to bear upon this other memory of yours, the peaceful stillness of contentment and the vivifying rain of benevolence.'"[1] * * * * * * * *

[I leave out here, as well as in other places, mere notes of journeys and various small matters, very probably of no interest.]

"In last month's passage across the hills near V————, I was irresistibly drawn to examine a deserted building, which I at first took for a grain holder, or something like that. It was of stone, square, with no openings, no windows, no door. From what could be seen outside, it might have been the ruins of a strong, stone foundation for some old building, gateway or tower. Kunâla stood not far off and looked over it, and later on he asked me for my ideas about the place. All I could say, was, that although it seemed to be solid, I was thinking that perhaps it might be hollow.

"'Yes,' said he, 'it is hollow. It is one of the places once made by Yogees to go into deep trance in. If used by a chela (a disciple) his teacher kept watch over it so that no one might intrude. But when an adept wants to use it for laying his body away in while he travels about in his real, though perhaps to some unseen, form, other means of protection were often taken which were just as secure as the presence of the teacher of the disciple.' 'Well,' I said, 'it must be that just now no one's body is inside there.'

"'Do not reach that conclusion nor the other either. It may be occupied and it may not.'

"Then we journeyed on, while he told me of the benevolence of not only Brahmin Yogees, but also of Buddhist. No differences can be observed by the true disciple in any other disciple who is perhaps of a different faith. All pursue truth. Roads differ but the goal of all remains alike."

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[1] The careful student will remember that Jacob Boehme speaks of the "harsh and bitter anguish of nature which is the principle that produces bones and all corporification." So here the master, it appears, tells the fortunate chela, that in the spiritual and mental world, anxiety, harsh and bitter, raises a veil before us and prevents us from using our memory. He refers, it would seem, to the other memory above the ordinary. The correctness and value of what was said in this, must be admitted when we reflect that, after all, the whole process of development is the process of *getting back the memory of the past.* And that too is the teaching found in pure Buddhism as well also as in its corrupted form. —[Ed. *Path.*]

* * * "Repeated three times: 'Time ripens and dissolves all beings in the great self, but he who knows into what time itself is dissolved, he is the knower of the Veda.'

"What is to be understood, not only by this, but also by its being three times repeated?

"There were three shrines there. Over the door was a picture which I saw a moment, and which for a moment seemed to blaze out with light like fire. Fixed upon my mind its outlines grew, then disappeared, when I had passed the threshold. Inside, again its image came before my eyes. Seeming to allure me, it faded out, and then again returned. It remained impressed upon me, seemed imbued with life and intention to present itself for my own criticism. When I began to analyze it, it would fade, and then when I was fearful of not doing my duty or of being disrespectful to those beings, it returned as if to demand attention. Its description:

"A human heart that has at its centre a small spark—the spark expands and the heart disappears—while a deep pulsation seems to pass through me. At once identity is confused, I grasp at myself; and again the heart reappears with the spark increased to a large fiery space. Once more that deep movement; then sounds (7); they fade. All this in a picture? Yes! for in that picture there is life; there might be intelligence. It is similar to that picture I saw in Tibet on my first journey, where the living moon rises and passes across the view. Where was I? No, not afterwards! It was in the hall. Again that all pervading sound. It seems to bear me like a river. Then it ceased,—a soundless sound. Then once more the picture; here is Pranava[1]. But between the heart and the Pranava is a mighty bow with arrows ready, and tightly strung for use. Next is a shrine, with the Pranava over it, shut fast, no key and no keyhole. On its sides emblems of human passions. The door of the shrine opens and I think within I will see the truth. No! another door? a shrine again. It opens too and then another, brightly flashing is seen there. Like the heart, it makes itself one with me. Irresistable desire to approach it comes within me, and it absorbs the whole picture.

"'Break through the shrine of Brahman; use the doctrine of the teacher.'"[2]

[There is no connection here of this exhortation with any person, and very probably it is something that was said either by himself, in soliloquy, or by some voice or person to him.

I must end here, as I find great rents and spaces in the notes. He must have ceased to put down further things he saw or did in his real inner life, and you will very surely agree, that if he had progressed by that time to what the last portions would indicate, he could not set down his reflections thereon, or any memorandum of

[1] The mystic syllable OM.—[Ed. *Path.*]

[2] There is some reference here apparently to the Upanishad, for they contain a teacher's directions to break through all shrines until the last one is reached.—[Ed. *Path.*]

facts. We, however, can never tell what was his reason. He might have been told not to do so, or might have lacked the opportunity.

There was much all through these pages that related to his daily family life, not interesting to you; records of conversations; worldly affairs; items of money and regarding appointments, journeys and meetings with friends. But they show of course that he was all this time living through his set work with men, and often harrassed by care as well as comforted by his family and regardful of them. All of that I left out, because I supposed that while it would probably interest you, yet I was left with discretion to give only what seemed to relate to the period marked at its beginning, by his meetings with M———, and at the end by this last remarkable scene, the details of which we can only imagine. And likewise were of necessity omitted very much that is sufficiently unintelligible in its symbolism to be secure from revelation. Honestly have I tried to unlock the doors of the ciphers, for no prohibition came with their possession, but all that I could refine from its enfolding obscurity is given to you.

As he would say, let us salute each other and the last shrine of Brahman; Om, hari, Om! TRANS.]

THE GREAT QUEST*

"In many mortal forms I rashly sought
The shadow of that idol of my thought."

—*Shelley.*

"Après l'amour éteint si je vécus encore
C'est pour la vérité, soif aussi qui dévore!"

—*Lamartine.*

THE loss of youth and love is the perpetual wail of the poets. A never-changing spring-time of life, where the sweet dreams of youth would be realised in the fruition of reciprocal love, such would be a heaven to them, and such *is* a heaven while it lasts. If we add to this the refined æsthetic taste that can delicately balance and appreciate to a nicety every joy of the senses, and the highly-developed intellect which can roam at will over the accumulated store of past ages of culture, what would there be left for poets to dream of? With heart, senses and mind worthily employed, and with the well-balanced nature that knows moderation alone can give continued bliss, could not man rest satisfied at last? What more could he desire?

It is useless to deny that life has very sweet gifts to give, though the number is limited of those who are capable of receiving them in their fulness. But even while these gifts are being enjoyed, it is felt that the horizon is bounded. With what questioning uncertainty—albeit with fascination—does youth open its eyes upon the

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glamour of the dazzling world! The love of the Springtide, even in fruition, is continually building fairy bowers in the future—it never for long rests content in the present, while to the intellect the bounded scope of utmost learning is a still more definite goad towards a knowledge that shall transcend all past experience.

And even were man content to continue to drink of the one cup of bliss, he is never allowed to do so. The lessons of life, the great teacher, are continually being altered, and the tempest of the heart takes the place of the calm that was never expected to end.

If, then, we must look in vain to find permanent bliss in any of these things—if, beyond the highest intellectual culture of an intellectual age there gleams the vision of a higher knowledge—if behind the artistic refinement of this, as of all past flowers of civilization, the fount of all sweetness lies hid—if even the heart-binding communion of earthly love is but a faint reflex of the deep peace realized by him who has torn aside the veil that hides the Eternal, surely all man's energies should be devoted to the quest which will yield him such results.

The whole philosophy of life may be summed up in the Four great Truths that Buddha taught, and no more convincing description of them can be read than that given in the lovely lines of the eighth book of the "Light of Asia."

He who has once been deeply imbued with these great truths—who has realised the transitory nature of all earthly bliss, and the pains and sorrows that more than counterbalance the joys of life—will never in his truest moments desire to be again blessed, either in the present or in any future incarnation, with an uniformly happy life, for there is no such soporific for the soul as the feeling of satisfaction, as there is no such powerful goad as the feeling of dissatisfaction. He is bound to pass through periods of joy, but they will be looked forward to with fear and doubting, for then it is that the sense-world again fastens its fangs on the soul, to be followed by the pain of another struggle for freedom.

When first setting out on the great quest, it seems as if many life-times would fail to appease the dominant passion of the soul, but nature works quickly in the hottest climates, and from the very intensity of the desire may spring the strength and will to conquer it. Though it is probably the same key-note that is struck throughout, the dominant desire will appear to take a different tone through the ascending scale of life. It is a speculation, but one which would seem to receive endorsement from the analogies of nature; for as the human embryo in its ante-natal development, exhibits in rapid succession, but with longer pauses as it approaches the period of birth, the characteristics of the lower races of animal life from which man has evolved, so does the human soul realise in its passage through life the dominant desires and attractions which have affected it through countless past incarnations. The lower desires which in past lives may have been more or less completely conquered, will be experienced in rapid succession and left behind without much

difficulty, till the great struggle of the life is reached, from which man must come out more or less victorious if he is to continue the progress at all.

If right intention were the only thing needed, if it were a guarantee against being led astray, or if straying did not necessitate retardation on the road, there would be no such supreme necessity that belief should be in accordance with facts; but even in worldly affairs we see every day that purity of intention is no guard against the failures that come from lack of knowledge. In the great spiritual science therefore, which deals with the problem of life as a whole—not the mere fragment which this earthly existence represents—it will be seen how vitally necessary it is that facts should be conceived correctly.

To us whose eyes are blinded to the heights above, by the mists of our own desires, the only rays of light which can illumine the darkness of our journey on the great quest, are the words (whether or not in the form of recognised revelation) left by the masters who have preceded us on the road, and the counsel of our comrades who are bound for the same goal. But words are capable of many interpretations, and the opinions of our comrades are coloured by their own personality—the ultimate touch-stone of truth must therefore be looked for in the disciple's own breast.

Having stated the necessity for correct belief, let us now consider the question of the great achievement—the annihilation of Karma—the attainment of Nirvana. It must be acknowledged as a logical proposition that Karma can never annihilate Karma, *i. e.*, that no thoughts, words, or acts of the man in his present state of consciousness, can ever free him from the circle of re-births. This view would seem to necessitate some power external to the man to free him—a power which has touch of him, and which would have to be allied to him.

Now the teachings which have been put before the world in "Light on the Path" state the other side of the question. "Each man is to himself absolutely the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*." And again, "For within you is the light of the world, the only light that can be shed on the Path. If you are unable to perceive it within you, it is useless to look for it elsewhere." It would seem that the solution of this great paradox must be sought for in the constitution of man, as described in theosophic writings. Indeed, it is the scientific statement of deep spiritual truths which gives to the Theosophic teachings their remarkable value, and which seems likely to carry conviction of their truth to the Western peoples, who have for too long been accustomed to the mere emotional sentimentality of the orthodox religions, and to the pessimistic negation of science.

The higher principles, as they have been called, in the constitution of man, particularly the divine Atma, through which he is allied to the all-pervading Deity, must ever remain deep mysteries. But at least they are cognisable by the intellect, as providing logical stepping-stones for spanning the great gulf between Humanity and

Divinity,—the Power—the correct cognition of which provides the very link between both systems of thought—which is at the same time external to man, and has touch of him by its own divine light which enlightens him, and which is also the very man himself—his highest and truest Self.

For most of us it is the "God hidden in the Sanctuary," of whose very existence we are unaware, is known under the name of Iswara or the Logos—the primal ray from the Great Unknown. It is the Chrestos of the Christians, but, save, perhaps, to a few mystics in the Roman or Greek churches, it has been degraded past recognition by their materialistic anthropomorphism. A help to its better understanding may be obtained by a reference to Sanscrit philosophy, which describes man's nature as consisting of the three *gunas* or qualities—Satwa, goodness, Rajas, passion and Tamas, darkness, or delusion—and the nature of most men is made up almost entirely of the two last named—while the Logos is pure Satwa.

The vexed question, therefore, as to whether man is freed by his own dominant will, or by the power of the Logos, will be seen to be very much a distinction without a difference. For the attainment of final liberation the God within and the God without must co-operate.

Desire being, as Buddha taught, the great obstacle in the way, its conquest by the dominant will is the thing that has to be done, but the Divine will cannot arise in its power, till the conviction of the Supreme desirability of attaining the eternal condition is rendered permanent; and it is this that necessitates the goad which the Logos is continually applying by its light on the soul.

We are now face to face with a very difficult problem—it is, in fact the gulf which separates the Occultist from the Religionist, and it is here that it is so necessary to get hold of the correct idea.

> "Strong limbs may dare the rugged road which storms,
> Soaring and perilous, the mountain's breast;
> The weak must wind from slower ledge to ledge,
> With many a place of rest."

The short cut to perfection referred to in the first two lines has been called in Theosophic writings "the perilous ladder which leads to the path of life." To have faced the fearful abyss of darkness of the first trial, without starting back in terror at the apparent annihilation which the casting aside of the sense-life implies, and out of the still more awful silence of the second trial; to have had the strength to evoke the greater Self—the God that has hitherto been hidden in the sanctuary—such is the language used with reference to the very first—nay, the preliminary—steps on this path, while the further steps are represented by the ascending scale of the occult Hierarchy, where the neophyte or chela, through a series of trials and initiations, may attain the highest Adeptship, and the man may gradually leave behind him his human desires and limitations, and realise instead the attributes of Deity.

(*To be continued*) PILGRIM.

ON THE LOOKOUT

Those who remember H. P. Blavatsky's denunciations of Haeckel at a time when the German philosopher still wore unchallenged the white robe of a scientific sanctity will be interested in an essay on *Haeckel's New Calvinism* which appears in *Criticisms of Life* by Horace J. Bridges just published by Houghton Mifflin Company. Mr. Bridges is the head of the Ethical Society of Chicago and well qualified both by erudition and literary force to do some measure of justice to the high priest of an expiring materialism. But if materialism is expiring from the head downward it still possesses a good deal of vitality in the feet, since Mr. Bridges tells us that over a quarter of a million copies of *Force and Matter* have been sold in England and the British Colonies, that cheap editions are available in every country in Europe, and that it has been translated into twenty-four languages including Sanskrit. No wonder that this successful effort to destroy the human soul should be followed by the scourge of war.

Mr. Bridges first draws attention to the opinion of Professor Friedrich Paulsen who "after completely shattering the pretensions of Haeckel to rank as a philosopher, and exposing the egregious incompetence and the blatant dogmatism to which almost every page of his volume bears witness", ended his essay with the following notable words:—

> If every nation and every age has not only the government but also the literature that it deserves to have, yet, nevertheless, the responsibility for these things lies upon all who have part in them. I have read this book with burning shame—with shame for the level of general culture among our people. That such a book was possible—that it could have been written, printed, bought, read, admired, and believed by the nation that possesses a Kant, a Goethe, a Schopenhauer: this is painful.

And here the author pauses for a moment to cast a javelin at the Church which, itself materialistic, has extended the comfort of its apathy to Haeckel and his school.

> What the preacher chiefly deplores in the influence of Professor Haeckel is the childish materialism which this author shares with and intensifies in his readers. But this is only an illustration of the Church's long neglect of its duty. In so far as Haeckel and his disciples are materialists, they are in no wise different from the mass of their Christian opponents. For popular Christianity (as distinguished from philosophic and ethical Christianity) has never been anything but what Matthew Arnold bluntly but accurately called it: a materialistic fairy tale. . . . It has never taught men, because it has never understood, how to escape from the materialistic point of view. Its hell and heaven of physical torment and delight, its fantastic doctrine of the resurrection of the body (repeated every day, in this twentieth century, by thousands of priests and millions of laymen who know it to be baseless and absurd), its Sultan-like God seated on an actual throne, enjoying throughout eternity the flatteries of his prostrate worshippers—what is all this but a stark materialism, on the mental level of savages and children.

Haeckel, says the author, disclaims materialism, but this is but an example of the sleight of hand in which he deals, of the verbal jugglery which is either dishonest or which evidences the habit of nebulous thinking. For every sentence that seems to bear an idealistic interpretation there are a hundred which exclude anything but crass materialism.

In turning Haeckel's pages one drops across dozens of sentences like the following. He is describing the brain as the organ of conscious-

ness, and, having depicted the "sense centres", he goes on to talk about "the four great thought centres, or centres of association, the real organs of mental life; they are those highest instruments of psychic activity that *produce thought and consciousness.*" These are the words of the writer whose translator, in a preface to the book containing them, declares that he does not regard mind as a product of matter. Yet thought and consciousness are *produced* by the thought centres of the brain. Comment would perhaps not be superfluous, if only it were not impossible.

Elsewhere the author speaks of Haeckel's "farrago of ignorant nonsense" which was not allowed to pass unchallenged even in Germany. But it seems that Haeckel has been guilty of something worse than this, and we remember already to have heard something about forged photographs produced in support of a Haeckelian theory which, being a Haeckelian theory, must of course be sustained at any and every cost.

I met in Jena in 1909 some university students who, having formerly been enthusiastic disciples of Haeckel, had abandoned their allegiance in disgust because they were convinced that he had deliberately "faked" some of the pictures which illustrated his chapters on human phylogeny and embryology.

But there is no need to follow the author further. His object is not so much to show that Haeckel is unreliable as a scientist, that he is a loose observer, an inaccurate recorder, and an intolerant and bigoted dogmatist. These things have been said of others, but we do not remember any man of Haeckel's eminence who has been thus competently denounced as an imposter and a charlatan.

Now it is comparatively easy to expose the absurdities of Haeckel at a time like the present when materialism is already on the run, and when the great weight of scientific opinion has been withdrawn from its support. But H. P. Blavatsky said these same things forty years ago when Haeckel was still the Three In One of modern scientific speculation, when the very thunders of Sinai were visited upon the heads of those who failed to fall down and worship at the sound of his name. The last half of the second volume of the *Secret Doctrine* may be said to be devoted to a refutation of the poisonous nonsense of the Jena oracle, and we are inclined to wonder if Mr. Bridges may not have borrowed a little of its ammunition for his present purpose. Thus opening the *Secret Doctrine* almost at random we find on page 711 the following suggestive passage:—

The world may rest satisfied. The day is not far off when the "thrice great" Haeckel will have shown, to his own satisfaction, that the consciousness of Sir Isaac Newton was, physiologically speaking, but the reflex action, (or *minus* consciousness) caused by the perigenesis of the plastidules of our common ancestor and old friend, the Moneron Haeckelii. . . . He will go on asserting, as coolly as he has always done, that it was only the peculiar mode and motion of the ghost of the long-vanished atoms of our Father Bathybius, which—transmitted across aeons of time into the cell-tissue of the grey matter of the brains of every great man—caused Sophocles and Aeschylus, and Shakspere as well, to write their tragedies, Newton, his *Principia,* Humboldt, his *Cosmos,* etc. It also prompted Haeckel to invent Graeco-Latin names three inches long, pretending to mean a good deal, and meaning—nothing.

Now must we forget the denunciation of Haeckel and of his school that is to be found on page 688 of the same volume of the *Secret Doctrine,* a denunciation that will certainly lose none of its weight from recent events in Europe which it may be said almost to predict.

> Such men (as Haeckel, Carl Vogt, Ludwig Buchner and Huxley) are simply the intellectual and moral murderers of future generations; especially Haeckel whose crass materialism often rises to the height of idiotic naivetes in his reasonings. One has but to read his *Pedigree of Man* and Other Essays (Aveling's Translation) to feel a desire that, in the words of Job, his remembrance should perish from the Earth, and that he "shall have no name in the streets".

In no other case does H. P. Blavatsky use words of such stern denunciation as these, and now we find them echoed by one of the foremost thinkers and essayists of the day. But at the time her voice was as that of one crying in the wilderness.

Miss Evelyn Underhill, in the preposterously inflated language of the day, is said to know more of mysticism than any one living. She has certainly written voluminously on her favorite topic, and perhaps the general praise accorded to her is due to the fact that she is invariably deferential toward conventional beliefs and opinions. The same adroit policy explains the popularity of Bergson and other of a like kind who dextrously spin gossamer webs in the sunshine but with an anxious care lest they interfere with the vested rights of the religionists to spin other webs.

Miss Underhill's latest volume is entitled *Practical Mysticism* and it is published by E. P. Dutton & Company. It contains no metaphysical disquisitions nor abstractions, since these have been dealt with fully in her preceding works. Nor is it addressed to the learned nor the devout, since these have usually libraries and leisure at their service. Her object is to show the average man how he may become a mystic and something of the treasure of mysticism that awaits his claim. Mysticism, she says, is the art of union with Reality, and if we ask, What is Reality, she will reply that only the mystic can know it. But we can at least know that what we have is not Reality, that even in the world of sense impressions we do no more than pick one here and one there, weaving them together into some sort of a fabric that shall correspond with self-interest. It is the mind, guided and controlled by selfishness, that eternally selects from the wealth of material submitted to it, and selects nothing that shall not serve its desires. If we will know Reality we must learn to look at things as they are, in their entirety, and free from the selective domination of self-interest.

And to do this we must first of all control the mind and compel it to be the servant and not the master. The effort to do this, says Miss Underhill, is likely to result in a sense of humiliation. We shall find that the mind escapes us, and must be brought back again and again to the object of contemplation. And there must be detachment, for without detachment there will be selection, and we shall lose Reality. And with detachment will come a change in the "scale of values". We shall know the "inherent silliness" of our earnest pursuit of impermanent things, our solemn concentration upon the game of getting on. The claims of "the I, the Me, the Mine" will be less vociferous as we approach nearer to the heart of things. Our lives will slowly become attuned to the things that are eternal.

Miss Underhill's treatment of her topic is irreproachable so far as it goes. Her faults are those of omission and not of commission. Censuring the average mind for its selective tendencies, she herself shows those same selective tendencies to a marked degree. She seems to suppose that mysticism is peculiarly a characteristic of Christianity, and that if it has occasionally made itself felt in other systems it is as a transient visitor rather than a resident. Now Christian mysticism is purely empirical, and therefore it can hardly be regarded as mysticism at all since it has no scientific basis. With the single exception of Boehme, described by H. P. Blavatsky as the

nursling of the Nirmanakayas, no Christian mystic has ever known the meaning of his own experiences and very few have even sought to know them. They are amateurs and tyros. They have been content with their little incursions into the domain of abnormal consciousness and with the ready made explanations of their own dogmatic faiths. It is true that Saint Teresa did make some slight effort to map the territory into which she had wandered, and to indicate its landmarks for the benefit of her pupils, but the effort and the success were almost insignificant. They must have been so, founded as they were upon preconceived convictions of the most tenacious kind. Now Miss Underhill must surely be aware that even the greatest of Christian mystics were no more than children playing on the shore in comparison with the Hindu sages who not only set sail over the ocean of the spiritual life but who mapped and charted it, leaving no depth unsounded, no rock or shoal unmarked. And yet this gifted lady gives us volume after volume about mysticism in which the real pioneers of mysticism are hardly mentioned, in which their tremendous teachings are practically unnoticed. Therefore with all possible respect we may recommend to Miss Underhill the admonition of her favorite mystic, St. Teresa, who said to her pupils "I do not require of you to form great and curious considerations in your understanding: I require of you no more than to *look*."

Rabindranath Tagore has performed some slight service to oriental thought by his translation of the *Songs of Kabir* lately published by the Macmillan Company. And it may be said that the distinguished Indian poet has so far done little enough to use his great and deserved popularity for the promulgation of spiritual ideals.

Kabir was a Hindu mystic who lived about 1440, and who rose to fame by his declarations that the whole apparatus of piety, both Hindu and Moslem, was no more than a substitute for Reality, that the "images are all lifeless, they cannot speak". For these outspoken avowals he was persecuted by the priestly caste, but the Emperor Sikandar Lodi refused to punish him on the ground that he was a Mohammedan and therefore beyond the jurisdiction of the indignant Brahmans. None the less, when Kabir died the Mohammedans and the Hindus disputed for the possession of his body, a quarrel that was settled by the appearance of Kabir himself, who told the disputants to look under his shroud. They did so, and found there only a heap of flowers, and these they divided, half of them being buried by the Mohammedans at Maghar and the other half solemnly burned by the Hindus in the holy city of Benares.

Many of these songs are of a striking kind, although with a certain excessive saccharine quality that cloys. But the real nature of Kabir's wisdom is shown unmistakeably and in many places, and of this perhaps a single specimen will suffice:—

O Brother, my heart yearns for that true Guru, who fills the cup of true love, and drinks of it himself, and offers it then to me.

He removes the veil from the eyes, and gives the true vision of Brahma:

He reveals the worlds in Him, and makes me to hear the Unstruck Music:

He shows joy and sorrow to be one:

He fills all utterance with love.

Kabir says: "Verily he has no fear, who has such a Guru to lead him to the shelter of safety."